

THE
ODYSSEY
OF
HOMER,

TRANSLATED BY A. POPE.

A NEW EDITION.

ADORNED WITH PLATES.

VOLUME III.

London:

PRINTED FOR F. J. ROVERAY *

By T. Bensley, Bolt Court;

AND SOLD BY J. AND A. ARCH, CORNHILL, AND
E. LLOYD, HARLEY STREET.

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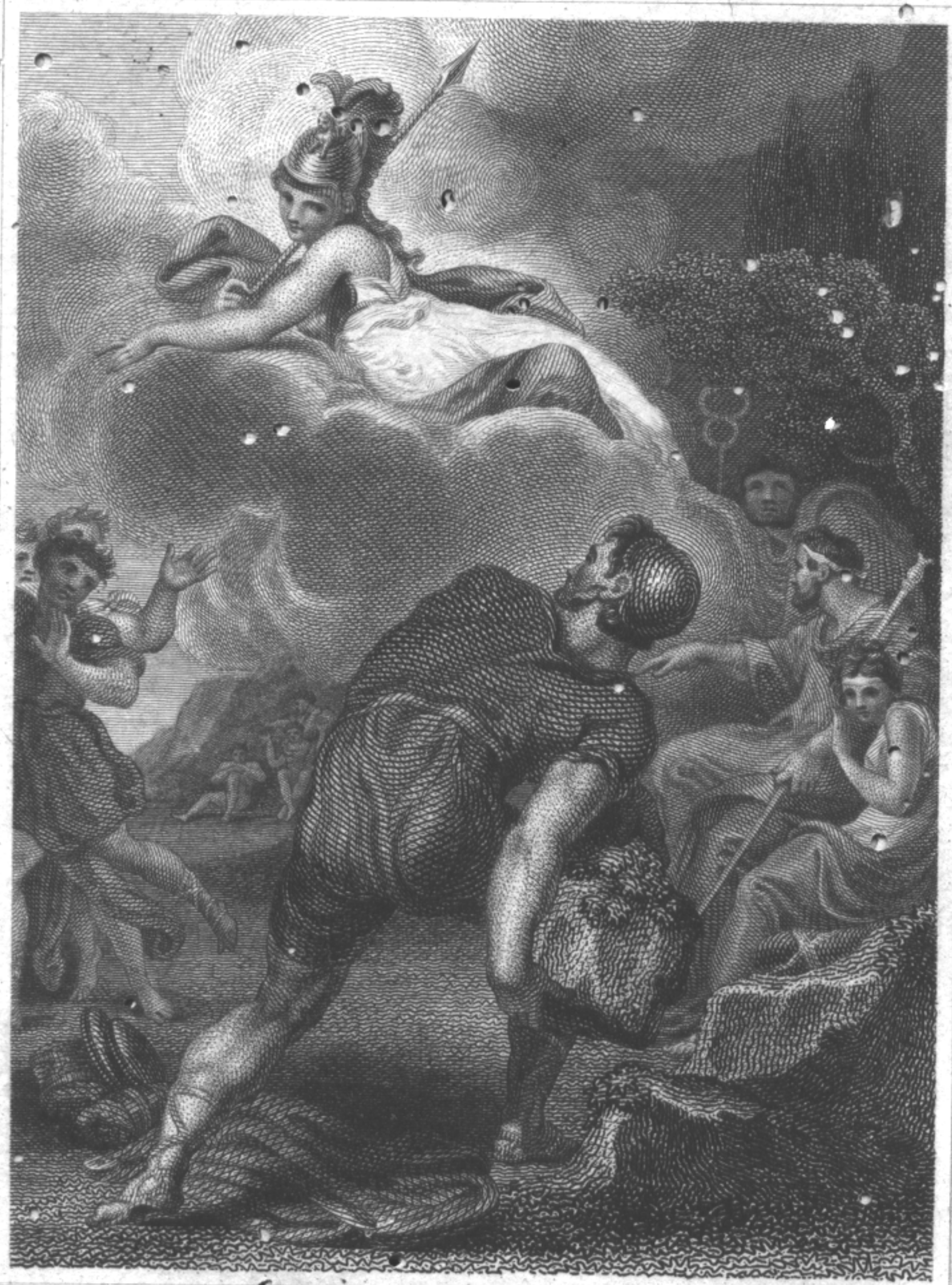
1806.



THE
EIGHTH BOOK
OF THE
ODYSSEY.

THE ARGUMENT.

ALCINOUS calls a council, in which it is resolved to transport Ulysses into his country. After which splendid entertainments are made, where the celebrated musician and poet Demodocus plays and sings to the guests. They next proceed to the games, the race, the wrestling, discus, &c. where Ulysses casts a prodigious length, to the admiration of all the spectators. They return again to the banquet, and Demodocus sings the loves of Mars and Venus. Ulysses, after a compliment to the poet, desires him to sing the introduction of the wooden horse into Troy; which subject provoking his tears, Alcinous inquires of his guest his name, parentage, and fortunes.



Drawn by E. F. Burney

Engraved by J. G. Walker

THE PROPERTY OF
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GOVERNMENT OF INDIA



BOOK VIII.

Now fair Aurora lifts her golden ray,
And all the ruddy orient flames with day:
Alcinous, and the chief, with dawning light,
Rose instant from the slumbers of the night;
Then to the council-seat they bend their way, 5
And fill the shining thrones along the bay.

Meanwhile Minerva, in her guardian care,
Shoots from the starry vault through fields of air;
In form a herald of the king, she flies
From peer to peer, and thus incessant cries: 10
Nobles and chiefs who rule Phæacia's states,
The king in council your attendance waits:
A prince of grace divine your aid implores,
O'er unknown seas arriv'd from unknown shores.

She spoke, and sudden with tumultuous sounds
Of thronging multitudes the shore rebounds: 16
At once the seats they fill: and ev'ry eye
Gaz'd, as before some brother of the sky.
Pallas with grace divine his form improves,
More high he treads, and more enlarg'd he moves:

She sheds celestial bloom, regard to draw; 21
 And gives a dignity of mien, to awe;
 With strength, the future prize of fame to play,
 And gather all the honours of the day.

Then from his glitt'ring throne Alcinous rose:
 Attend, he cried, while we our will disclose. 26
 Your present aid this godlike stranger craves,
 Tost by rude tempest through a war of waves;
 Perhaps from realms that view the rising day,
 Or nations subject to the western ray. 30
 Then grant, what here all sons of woe obtain
 (For here affliction never pleads in vain):
 Be chosen youths prepar'd, expert to try
 The vast profound, and bid the vessel fly:
 Launch the tall bark, and order ev'ry oar; 35
 Then in our court indulge the genial hour.
 Instant, you sailors, to this task attend;
 Swift to the palace, all ye peers ascend;
 Let none to strangers honours due disclaim:
 Be there Demodocus, the bard of fame, 40
 Taught by the gods to please, when high he sings
 The vocal lay, responsive to the strings.

Thus spoke the prince: th'attending peers obey,
 In state they move; Alcinous leads the way:

Swift to Demodocus the herald flies, 45
 At once the sailors to their charge arise;
 They launch the vessel, and unfurl the sails,
 And stretch the swelling canvas to the gales;
 Then to the palace move: a gath'ring throng,
 Youth, and white age, tumultuous pour along: 50
 Now all accesses to the dome are filled;
 Eight boars, the choicest of the herd, are kill'd:
 Two beeves, twelve fatlings from the flock, they
 bring
 To crown the feast; so wills the bounteous king.
 The herald now arrives, and guides along 55
 The sacred master of celestial song:
 Dear to the muse! who gave his days to flow
 With mighty blessings, mix'd with mighty woe:
 With clouds of darkness quench'd his visual ray,
 But gave him skill to raise the lofty lay. 60
 High on a radiant throne sublime in state,
 Encircled by huge multitudes, he sat:
 With silver shone the throne; his lyre, well strung
 To rapt'rous sounds, at hand Pontonous hung:
 Before his seat a polish'd table shines, 65
 And a full goblet foams with gen'rous wines:
 His food a herald bore: and now they fed;
 And now the rage of craving hunger fled.

Then fir'd by all the muse, aloud he sings
 The mighty deeds of demigods and kings: 70
 From that fierce wrath the noble song arose,
 That made Ulysses and Achilles foes:
 How o'er the feast they doom the fall of Troy;
 The stern debate Atrides hears with joy:
 For heav'n foretold the contest, when he trod 75
 The marble threshold of the Delphic god,
 Curious to learn the counsels of the sky,
 Ere yet he loos'd the rage of war on Troy.

Touch'd at the song, Ulysses straight resign'd.
 To soft affliction all his manly mind: 80
 Before his eyes the purple vest he drew,
 Industrious to conceal the falling dew:
 But when the music paus'd, he ceas'd to shed
 The flowing tear, and rais'd his drooping head:
 And lifting to the gods a goblet crown'd, 85
 He pour'd a pure libation to the ground.

Transported with the song, the list'ning train
 Again with loud applause demand the strain:
 Again Ulysses veil'd his pensive head,
 Again unmann'd, a show'r of sorrow shed: 90
 Conceal'd he wept: the king observ'd alone
 The silent tear, and heard the secret groan:

Then to the bard aloud: O cease to sing,
 Dumb be thy voice, and mute th' harmonious string;
 Enough the feast has pleas'd, enough the pow'r
 Of heav'nly song has crown'd the genial hour! 96
 Incessant in the games your strength display,
 Contest, ye brave, the honours of the day!

That pleas'd th' admiring stranger may proclaim,
 In distant regions the Phæacian fame: 100
 None wield the gauntlet with so dire a sway,
 Or swifter in the race devour the way;
 None in the leap spring with so strong a bound,
 Or firmer, in the wrestling, press the ground.

Thus spoke the king: th' attending peers obey,
 In state they move; Alcinous leads the way: 106
 His golden lyre Demodocus unstrung,
 High on a column in the palace hung;
 And guided by a herald's guardian cares,
 Majestic to the lists of fame repairs. 110

Now swarms the populace; a countless throng,
 Youth and hoar age; and man drives man along:
 The games begin; ambitious of the prize,
 Acroneus, Thoon, and Eretmeus rise;
 The prize Ocyalus and Pymneus claim, 115
 Anchialus and Ponteus, chiefs of fame:

There Proreus, Nautes, Eratreus appear,
 And fam'd Amphialus, Polyneus' heir:
 Euryalus, like Mars terrific, rose,
 When clad in wrath he withers hosts of foes: 120
 Naubolides with grace unequall'd shone,
 Or equall'd by Laodamas alone.

With these came forth Ambasineus the strong,
 And three brave sons from great Alcinous sprung.

Rang'd in a line the ready racers stand, 125
 Start from the goal, and vanish o'er the strand:
 Swift as on wings of wind upborne they fly,
 And drifts of rising dust involve the sky:
 Before the rest, what space the hinds allow
 Between the mule and ox, from plough to plough,
 Clytoneus sprung: he wing'd the rapid way, 130
 And bore th' unrivall'd honours of the day.

With fierce embrace the brawny wrestlers join:
 The conquest, great Euryalus, is thine.

Amphialus sprung forward with a bound, 135
 Superior in the leap a length of ground:
 From Eratreus' strong arm the discus flies,
 And sings with unmatch'd force along the skies.
 And Laodam whirls high, with dreadful sway,
 The gloves of death, victorious in the fray. 140

While thus the peerage in the games contends,
In act to speak, Laodamas ascends :

O friends, he cries, the stranger seems well
skill'd

To try th' illustrious labours of the field:

I deem him brave; then grant the brave man's
claim, 145

Invite the hero to his share of fame.

What nervous arms he boasts! how firm his tread!

His limbs how turn'd! how broad his shoulders
spread!

By age unbroke!——but all-consuming care .

Destroys perhaps the strength that time would
spare: 150

Dire is the ocean, dread in all its forms!

Man must decay, when man contends with storms.

Well hast thou spoke (Euryalus replies),

Thine is the guest, invite him thou to rise.

Swift at the word advancing from the crowd 155

He made obeisance, and thus spoke aloud:

Vouchsafes the rev'rend stranger to display,

His manly worth, and share the glorious day?

Father, arise! for thee thy port proclaims

Expert to conquer in the solemn games. 160

To fame arise! for what more fame can yield
 Than the swift race, or conflict of the field?
 Steal from corroding care one transient day,
 To glory give the space thou hast to stay;
 Short is the time, and lo! e'en now the gales 165
 Call thee aboard, and stretch the swelling sails.

To whom with sighs Ulysses gave reply:
 Ah why th' ill-suiting pastime must I try?
 To gloomy care my thoughts alone are free;
 Ill the gay sports with troubled hearts agree: 170
 Sad from my natal hour my days have ran,
 A much-afflicted, much-enduring man!
 Who suppliant to the king and peers, implores
 A speedy voyage to his native shores.

Wide wanders, Laodam, thy erring tongue,
 The sports of glory to the brave belong 176
 (Retorts Euryalus): he boasts no claim
 Among the great, unlike the sons of fame.
 A wand'ring merchant he frequents the main,
 Some mean sea-farer in pursuit of gain; 180
 Studious of freight, in naval trade well skill'd,
 But dreads th' athletic labours of the field.

Incens'd Ulysses with a frown replies:
 O forward to proclaim thy soul unwise! 184

With partial hands the gods their gifts dispense;
 Some greatly think, some speak with manly sense;
 Here heav'n an elegance of form denies,
 But wisdom the defect of form supplies:
 This man with energy of thought controuls,
 And steals with modest violence our souls, 190
 He speaks reserv'dly, but he speaks with force,
 Nor can one word be chang'd but for a worse;
 In public more than mortal he appears,
 And as he moves the gazing crowd reveres:
 While others, beauteous as th' ethereal kind, 195
 The nobler portion want, a knowing mind.
 In outward show heav'n gives thee to excel,
 But heav'n denies the praise of thinking well.
 Ill bear the brave a rude ungovern'd tongue,
 And, youth, my gen'rous soul resents the wrong:
 Skill'd in heroic exercise, I claim 201
 A post of honour with the sons of fame:
 Such was my boast while vigour crown'd my days,
 Now care surrounds me, and my force decays;
 Inur'd a melancholy part to bear, 205
 In scenes of death, by tempest and by war.
 Yet thus by woes impair'd, no more I wave
 To prove the hero.—Slander stings the brave.

Then striding forward with a furious bound,
 He wrench'd a rocky fragment from the ground.
 By far more pōnd'rōus, and more huge by far, 211
 Than what Phæaciā's sons discharg'd in air.
 Fierce from his arm th' enormous load he flings;
 Sonorous through the shaded air it sings:
 Couch'd to the earth, tempestuous as it flies, 215
 The crowd gaze upward while it cleaves the skies.
 Beyond all marks, with many a giddy round
 Down rushing, it up-turns a hill of ground.

That instant Pallas, bursting from a cloud,
 Fix'd a distinguish'd mark, and cried aloud: 220

E'en he who sightless wants his visual ray,
 May by his touch alone award the day:
 Thy signal throw transcends the utmost bound
 Of ev'ry champion by a length of ground:
 Securely bid the strongest of the train 225
 Arise to throw: the strongest throws in vain.

She spoke; and momentary mounts the sky:
 The friendly voice Ulysses hears with joy;
 Then thus aloud (elate with decent pride):
 Rise, ye Phæaciāns, try your force, he cried; 230
 If with this throw the strongest caster vie,
 Still, further still, I bid the discus fly.

Stand forth, ye champions, who the gauntlet wield,

Or you, the swiftest racers of the field!

Stand forth, ye wrestlers, who these pastimes grace!

I wield the gauntlet, and I run the race. 236

In such heroic games I yield to none,

Or yield to brave Laodamas alone:

Shall I with brave Laodamas contend?

A friend is sacred, and I style him friend. 240

Ungen'rous were the man, and base of heart,

Who takes the kind, and pays th' ungrateful part;

Chiefly the man, in foreign realms confin'd,

Base to his friend, to his own int'rest blind:

All, all your heroes I this day defy; 245

Give me a man, that we our might may try.

Expert in ev'ry art, I boast the skill

To give the feather'd arrow wings to kill;

Should a whole host at once discharge the bow,

My well-aim'd shaft with death prevents the foe:

Alone superior in the field of Troy, 251

Great Philoctetes taught the shaft to fly.

From all the sons of earth unrivall'd praise

I justly claim; but yield to better days,

To those fam'd days when great Alcides rose, 255

And Eurytus, who bade the gods be foes:

(Vain Eurytus, whose art became his crime,
 Swept from the earth he perish'd in his prime;
 Sudden th' irretrievable way he trod,
 Who boldly durst defy the bowyer-god) . 260
 In fighting fields as far the spear I throw,
 As flies an arrow from the well-drawn bow.
 Sole in the race the contest I decline,
 Stiff are my weary joints; and I resign, 264
 By storms and hunger worn: age well may fail,
 When storms and hunger both at once assail.

Abash'd, the numbers hear the godlike man,
 Till great Alcinous mildly thus began:

Well hast thou spoke, and well thy gen'rous
 tongue

With decent pride refutes a public wrong: 270
 Warm are thy words, but warm without offence;
 Fear only fools, secure in men of sense:
 Thy worth is known. Then hear our country's
 claim,

And bear to heroes our heroic fame;
 In distant realms our glorious deeds display, 275
 Repeat them frequent in the genial day;
 When bless'd with ease thy woes and wand'rings
 end,

Teach them thy consort, bid thy sons attend;

How lov'd of Joth he crown'd our sires with praise,
 How we, their offspring, dignify our race. 280

Let other realms the deathful gauntlet wield,
 Or boast the glories of th' athletic field;
 We in the course unrivall'd speed display,
 Or through cærulean billows plough the way;
 To dress, to dance, to sing, our sole delight, 285

The feast or bath by day, and love by night:

Rise then, ye skill'd in measures; let him bear

Your fame to men that breathe a distant air,

And faithful say, to you the pow'rs belong

To race, to sail, to dance, to chaunt the song. 290

But, herald, to the palace swift repair,

And the soft lyre to grace our pastimes bear.

Swift at the word, obedient to the king,

The herald flies the tuneful lyre to bring.

Up rose nine seniors, chosen to survey 295

The future games, the judges of the day:

With instant care they mark a spacious round,

And level for the dance th' allotted ground:

The herald bears the lyre: intent to play,

The bard advancing meditates the lay: 300

Skill'd in the dance, tall youths, a blooming band,

Graceful before the heav'nly minstrel stand;

Light-bounding from the earth, at once they rise,
 Their feet half-viewless quiver in the skies:
 Ulysses gaz'd, astonish'd to survey 305
 The glancing splendours as their sandals play.
 Meantime the bard, alternate to the strings,
 The loves of Mars and Cytherea sings;
 How the stern god, enamour'd with her charms,
 Clasp'd the gay panting goddess in his arms, 310
 By bribes seduc'd: and how the sun, whose eye
 Views the broad heav'ns, disclos'd the lawless joy.
 Stung to the soul, indignant through the skies
 To his black forge vindictive Vulcan flies:
 Arriv'd, his sinewy arms incessant place 315
 Th' eternal anvil on the massy base.
 A wond'rous net he labours, to betray
 The wanton lovers, as entwin'd they lay;
 Indissolubly strong! Then instant bears
 To his immortal dome the finish'd snares. 320
 Above, below, around, with art dispread,
 The sure inclosure folds the genial bed;
 Whose texture e'en the search of gods deceives,
 Thin as the filmy threads the spider weaves.
 Then, as withdrawing from the starry bow'rs, 325
 He feigns a journey to the Lemnian shores,

His fav'rite isle! Observant Mars descries
 His wish'd recess, and to the goddess flies;
 He glows, he burns: the fair-hair'd queen of love
 Descends smooth-gliding from the courts of Jove,
 Gay blooming in full charms: her hand he press'd
 With eager joy, and with a sigh address'd:

Come, my belov'd! and taste the soft delights:
 Come, to repose the genial bed invites:

Thy absent spouse, neglectful of thy charms, 335
 Prefers his barb'rous Sintians to thy arms!

Then, nothing loath, th' enamour'd fair he led,
 And sunk transported on the conscious bed.

Down rush'd the toils, inwrapping as they lay
 The careless lovers in their wanton play: 340

In vain they strive, th' intangling snares deny
 (Inextricably firm) the pow'r to fly.

Warn'd by the god who sheds the golden day,
 Stern Vulcan homeward treads the starry way: 344

Arriv'd, he sees, he grieves, with rage he burns;
 Full horrible he roars, his voice all heav'n returns:

Ó Jove, he cried, O all ye pow'rs above,
 See the lewd dalliance of the queen of love!
 Me, awkward me, she scorns; and yields her charms
 To that fair letcher, the strong god of arms. 350

If I am lame, that stain my natal hour
 By fate impos'd; such me my parent bore:
 Why was I born? See how the wanton lies!
 O sight tormenting to an husband's eyes!
 But yet I trust, this once e'en Mars would fly 355
 His fair-one's arms—he thinks her, once, too nigh.
 But there remain, ye guilty, in my pow'r,
 Till Jove refunds his shameless daughter's dow'r.
 Too dear I priz'd a fair enchanting face:
 Beauty unchaste is beauty in disgrace. 360

Meanwhile the gods the dome of Vulcan throng,
 Apollo comes, and Neptune comes along,
 With these gay Hermes trod the starry plain;
 But modesty withheld the goddess-train.
 All heav'n beholds, imprison'd as they lie, 365
 And unextinguish'd laughter shakes the sky.

Then mutual, thus they spoke: Behold on wrong
 Swift vengeance waits; and art subdues the strong!
 Dwells there a god on all th' Olympian brow
 More swift than Mars, and more than Vulcan slow?
 Yet Vulcan conquers, and the god of arms 371
 Must pay the penalty for lawless charms.

Thus serious they: but he who gilds the skies,
 The gay Apollo, thus to Hermes cries: 374

Would'st thou enchain'd like Mars, O Hermes, lie,
And bear the shame like Mars, to share the joy?

O envy'd shame! (the smiling youth rejoin'd)
Add thrice the chains, and thrice more firmly bind;
Gaze all ye gods, and ev'ry goddess gaze,
Yet eager would I bless the sweet disgrace. 380

— Loud laugh the rest, e'en Neptune laughs aloud,
Yet sues importunate to loose the god:
And free, he cries, O Vulcan! free from shame
Thy captives; I ensure the penal claim.

Will Neptune (Vulcan then) the faithless trust?
He suffers who gives surety for th' unjust: 386
But say, if that lewd scandal of the sky,
To liberty restor'd, perfidious fly;
Say, wilt thou bear the mulct? He instant cries,
The mulct I bear, if Mars perfidious flies. 390

To whom appeas'd: No more I urge delay;
When Neptune sues, my part is to obey.
Then to the snares his force the god applies;
They burst; and Mars to Thrace indignant flies:
To the soft Cyprian shores the goddess moves, 395
To visit Paphos and her blooming groves,
Where to the pow'r an hundred altars rise,
And breathing odours scent the balmy skies:

Conceal'd she bathes in consecrated bow'rs,
 The Graces unguents shed, ambrosial show'rs, 400
 Unguents that charm the gods! she last assumes
 Her wond'rous robes; and full the goddess blooms.

Thus sung the bard: Ulysses hears with joy,
 And loud applauses rend the vaulted sky. 404

Then to the sports his sons the king commands
 Each blooming youth before the monarch stands,
 In dance unmatched! A wond'rous ball is brought,
 (The work of Polybus, divinely wrought)
 This youth with strength enormous bids it fly,
 And bending backward whirls it to the sky; 410
 His brother springing with an active bound,
 At distance intercepts it from the ground:
 The ball dismiss'd, in dance they skim the strand,
 Turn and return, and scarce imprint the sand.
 Th' assembly gazes with astonish'd eyes, 415
 And send in shouts applauses to the skies.

Then thus Ulysses: Happy king, whose name
 The brightest shines in all the rolls of fame:
 In subjects happy! with surprise I gaze; 419
 Thy praise was just; their skill transcends thy praise.

Pleas'd with his people's fame the monarch hears,
 And thus benevolent accosts the peers

Since wisdom's sacred guidance he pursues,
 Give to the stranger-guest a stranger's dues:
 Twelve princes in our realm dominion share, 425
 O'er whom supreme, imperial pow'r I bear:
 Bring gold, a pledge of love; a talent bring,
 A vest, a robe; and imitate your king:
 Be swift to give; that he this night may share
 The social feast of joy, with joy sincere. 430
 And thou, Euryalus, redeem thy wrong:
 A gen'rous heart repairs a sland'rous tongue.

Th' assenting peers, obedient to the king,
 In haste their heralds send the gifts to bring.
 Then thus Euryalus: O prince, whose sway 435
 Rules this bless'd realm, repentant I obey!
 Be his this sword, whose blade of brass displays
 A ruddy gleam; whose hilt, a silver blaze;
 Whose ivory sheath, inwrought with curious pride,
 Adds graceful terror to the wearer's side. 440

He said, and to his hand the sword consign'd;
 And if, he cried, my words affect thy mind,
 Far from thy mind those words, ye whirlwinds, bear,
 And scatter them, ye storms, in empty air!
 Crown, O ye heav'ns, with joy his peaceful hours,
 And grant him to his spouse and native shores! 446

And bless'd be thou, my friend, Ulysses cries,
 Crown him with ev'ry joy, ye fav'ring skies;
 To thy calm hours continu'd peace afford,
 And never, never may'st thou want this sword! 450

He said, and o'er his shoulder flung the blade.
 Now o'er the earth ascends the ev'ning shade:
 The precious gifts th' illustrious heralds bear,
 And to the court th' embody'd peers repair.
 Before the queen Alcinous' sons unfold 455
 The vests, the robes, and heaps of shining gold;
 Then to the radiant thrones they move in state:
 Aloft, the king in pomp imperial sat.

Thence to the queen: O partner of our reign,
 O sole belov'd! command thy menial train 460
 A polish'd chest and stately robes to bear,
 And healing waters for the bath prepare:
 That bath'd, our guest may bid his sorrows cease,
 Hear the sweet song, and taste the feast in peace.
 A bowl that flames with gold, of wond'rous frame,
 Ourselves we give, memorial of our name; 466
 To raise in off'rings to almighty Jove,
 And ev'ry god that treads the courts above.

Instant the queen, observant of the king,
 Commands her train a spacious vase to bring; 470

The spacious vase with ample streams suffice,
 Heap high the wood, and bid the flames arise.
 The flames climb round it with a fierce embrace,
 The ruming waters bubble o'er the blaze.
 Herself the chest prepares: in order roll'd 475
 The robes, the vests are rang'd, and heaps of gold:
 And adding a rich dress inwrought with art,
 A gift expressive of her bounteous heart,
 Thus spoke to Ithacus: To guard with bands
 Insolvable these gifts, thy care demands; 480
 Lest, in thy slumbers on the wat'ry main,
 The hand of rapine make our bounty vain.

Then bending with full force, around he roll'd
 A labyrinth of bands in fold on fold,
 Clos'd with Circean art. A train attends 485
 Around the bath: the bath the king ascends;
 (Untasted joy, since that disastrous hour,
 He sail'd ill-fated from Calypso's bow'r,
 Where, happy as the gods that range the sky,
 He feasted ev'ry sense, with ev'ry joy) 490
 He bathes; the damsels with officious toil
 Shed sweets, shed unguents, in a show'r of oil:
 Then o'er his limbs a gorgeous robe he spreads,
 And to the feast magnificently treads.

Full where the dome its shining valves expands,
 Nausicaa blooming as a goddess stands, 496
 With wond'ring eyes the hero she survey'd,
 And graceful thus began the royal maid:

Hail godlike stranger! and when heav'n restores
 To thy fond wish thy long-expected shores, 500
 This, ever grateful, in remembrance bear,
 To me thou ow'st, to me, the vital air,

O royal maid, Ulysses straight returns,
 Whose worth the splendours of thy race adorns,
 So may dread Jove (whose arm in vengeance forms
 The writhen bolt, and blackens heav'n with storms)
 Restore me safe, through weary wand'rings tost,
 To my dear country's ever-pleasing coast,
 As while the spirit in this bosom glows,
 To thee, my goddess, I address my vows; 510
 My life, thy gift I boast! He said, and sat,
 Fast by Alcinous on a throne of state.

Now each partakes the feast, the wine prepares,
 Portions the food, and each his portion shares.
 The bard an herald guides: the gazing throng 515
 Pay low obeisance as he moves along:
 Beneath a sculptur'd arch he sits enthron'd,
 The peers encircling form an awful round.

Then from the chine, Ulysses carves with art
 Delicious food, an honorary part; 520

This, let the master of the lyre receive,
 A pledge of love! 'tis all a wretch can give.

Lives there a man beneath the spacious skies,
 Who sacred honours to the bard denies?

The muse the bard inspires, exalts his mind; 525
 The muse indulgent loves th' harmonious kind.

The herald to his hand the charge conveys,
 Not fond of flatt'ry, nor unpleas'd with praise.

When now the rage of hunger was allay'd,
 Thus to the lyrist wise Ulysses said: 530

O more than man! thy soul the muse inspires,
 Or Phœbus animates with all his fires:

For who by Phœbus uninform'd, could know
 The woe of Greece, and sing so well the woe?

Just to the tale, as present at the fray, 535
 Or taught the labours of the dreadful day!

The song recalls past horrors to my eyes,
 And bids proud Ilion from her ashes rise.

Once more harmonious strike the sounding string,
 Th' Epæan fabric, fram'd by Pallas; sing: 540

How stern Ulysses, furious to destroy,
 With latent heroes sack'd imperial Troy.

If faithful thou record the tale of fame,
 The god himself inspires thy breast with flame:
 And mine shall be the task, henceforth to raise
 In ev'ry land thy monument of praise. 546

Full of the god he rais'd his lofty strain,
 How the Greeks rush'd tumultuous to the main:
 How blazing tents illumin'd half the skies,
 While from the shores the winged navy flies: 550
 How e'en in Ilion's walls, in deathful bands,
 Came the stern Greeks by Troy's assisting hands:
 All Troy up-heav'd the steed; of diff'ring mind,
 Various the Trojans counsell'd; part consign'd
 The monster to the sword, part sentence gave 555
 To plunge it headlong in the whelming wave;
 Th' unwise award to lodge it in the tow'rs,
 An off'ring sacred to th' immortal pow'rs:
 Th' unwise prevail, they lodge it in the walls,
 And by the gods' decree proud Ilion falls; 560
 Destruction enters in the treach'rous wood,
 And vengeful slaughter, fierce for human blood.

He sung the Greeks stern-issuing from the steed,
 How Ilion burns, how all her fathers bleed:
 How to thy dome, Deiphobus! ascends 565
 The Spartan king; how Ithacus attends,

(Horrid as Mars) and how with dire alarms

• He fights, subdues ; for Pallas strings his arms.

Thus while he sung, Ulysses' griefs renew, 569

Tear bathes his cheeks, and tears the ground bedew.

As some fond matron views in mortal fight

Her husband falling in his country's right:

Frantic through clashing swords she runs, she flies,

As ghastly pale he groans, and faints, and dies;

Close to his breast she grovels on the ground, 575

And bathes with floods of tears the gaping wound;

She cries, she shrieks; the fierce insulting foe

Relentless mocks her violence of woe:

To chains condemn'd, as wildly she deplores;

A widow, and a slave on foreign shores. 580

So from the sluices of Ulysses' eyes

Fast fell the tears, and sighs succeeded sighs:

Conceal'd he griev'd: the king observ'd alone

The silent tear, and heard the secret groan:

Then to the bard aloud: O cease to sing, 585

Dumb be thy voice, and mute the tuneful string:

To ev'ry note his tears responsive flow,

And his great heart heaves with tumultuous woe;

Thy lay too deeply moves: then cease the lay,

And o'er the banquet ev'ry heart be gay: 590

This social right demands: for him the sails,
 Floating in air, invite th' impelling gales:
 His are the gifts of love: the wise and good
 Receive the stranger as a brother's blood. 3

But, friend, discover faithful what I crave, 595
 Artful concealment ill becomes the brave:
 Say what thy birth, and what the name you bore,
 Impos'd by parents in the natal hour?
 (For from the natal hour distinctive names,
 One common right, the great and lowly claims)
 Say from what city, from what regions tost,
 And what inhabitants those regions boast?
 So shalt thou instant reach the realm assign'd,
 In wond'rous ships self-mov'd, instinct with mind;
 No helm secures their course, no pilot guides; 605
 Like man intelligent, they plough the tides,
 Conscious of ev'ry coast and ev'ry bay,
 That lies beneath the sun's all-seeing ray;
 Tho' clouds and darkness veil th' encumber'd sky,
 Fearless thro' darkness and thro' clouds they fly:
 Tho' tempests rage, tho' rolls the swelling main,
 The seas may roll, the tempests rage in vain;
 E'en the stern god that o'er the waves presides,
 Safe as they pass, and safe repass the tides,

With fury burns; while careless they convey 615
 Promiscuous ev'ry guest to ev'ry bay.
 These ears have heard my royal sire disclose
 A dreadful story big with future woes:
 How Neptune rag'd, and how, by his command,
 Firm rooted in a surge a ship should stand 620
 A monument of wrath: how mound on mound
 Should bury these proud tow'rs beneath the ground.
 But this the gods may frustrate or fulfil,
 As suits the purpose of th' eternal will. 624
 But say thro' what waste regions hast thou stray'd,
 What customs noted, and what coasts survey'd?
 Possess'd by wild barbarians fierce in arms,
 Or men, whose bosom tender pity warms?
 Say why the fate of Troy awak'd thy cares, 629
 Why heav'd thy bosom, and why flow'd thy tears?
 Just are the ways of heav'n: from heav'n proceed
 The woes of man; heav'n doom'd the Greeks to
 bleed,
 A theme of future song! Say then if slain
 Some dear-lov'd brother press'd the Phrygian plain?
 Or bled some friend, who bore a brother's part,
 And claim'd by merit, not by blood, the heart?

SELECT NOTES

TO

BOOK VIII.

THIS book has been more severely censured by the critics than any in the whole *Odyssey*: it may therefore be thought necessary to lay before the reader what may be offered in the poet's vindication.

Scaliger in his *Poetics* is very warm against it. Demodocus, observes that critic, sings the lust of the gods (*foeditates*) at the feast of Alcinous. And Bossu, though he vindicates the poet, remarks that we meet with some offensive passages in Homer, and instances in the adultery of Mars and Venus.

To know (says Aristotle in his *Art of Poetry*) whether a thing be well or ill spoken, we must not only examine the thing whether it be good or ill, but we must also have regard to him that speaks or acts, and to the person to whom the poet addresses; for the character of the person who speaks, and of him to whom he speaks, makes that to be good, which would not come well from the mouth of any other person. It is not on this account we vindicate Homer, with respect to the immorality that is found in the fable of the adultery of Mars and Venus: we must consider that it is neither the poet, nor his hero, that recites that story; but a Phæacian sings it to Phæacians, a soft effeminate people, at a festival. Besides, it is allowable even in grave and moral writings to introduce vicious persons, who despise the gods; and is not the poet obliged to adapt his poetry to the characters of such persons? And had it not been an absurdity in him to have given us a philosophical or moral song before a people who would be pleased with nothing but gaiety and effeminacy? The moral that we are to draw from this story is, that an idle and soft course of life is the source of all criminal pleasures; and that those persons who lead such lives, are generally pleased to hear such stories, as make

their betters partakers in the same vices. This relation of Homer is a useful lesson to them who desire to live virtuously; and it teaches, that if we would not be guilty of such vices, we must avoid such a method of life as inevitably leads to the practice of them.

Rapin attacks this book on another side, and blames it not for its immorality, but lowness. Homer, says he, puts off that air of grandeur and majesty which so properly belongs to his character; he debases himself into a droll, and sinks into a familiar way of talking: he turns things into ridicule, by endeavouring to entertain his reader with something pleasant and diverting: for instance, in the eighth book of the *Odyssey*, he entertains the gods with a comedy, some of whom he makes buffoons: Mars and Venus are introduced upon the stage, taken in a net laid by Vulcan, contrary to the gravity which is so essential to epic poetry.

It must be granted, that the gods are here painted in colours unworthy of deities, yet still with propriety, if we respect the spectators, who are ignorant debauched Phæacians. Homer was obliged to draw them, not according to his own idea of the gods, but according to the wild fancies of the Phæacians. The poet is not at liberty to ascribe the wisdom of a Socrates to Alcinous: he must follow nature; and, like a painter, he may draw deities or monsters, and introduce, as he pleases, either vicious or virtuous characters, provided he always makes them of a piece, consistent with their first representation.

This rule of Aristotle in general, vindicates Homer, and it is necessary to carry it in our minds, because it ought to be applied to all incidents that relate to the Phæacians in the sequel of the *Odyssey*.

V. 6. *And fill the shining thrones along the bay.*] This place of council was between the two ports, where the temple of Neptune stood; probably, like that in the second book, open to the air.

V. 9. *In form a herald*] It may be asked what occasion there is to introduce a goddess, to perform an action that might have been as well executed by a real herald? Eustathius observes, that this Minerva is either fame, which informs the Phæacians

that a stranger of uncommon figure is arrived, and upon this report they assemble; or it implies, that this assembly was made by the wisdom of the peers, and consequently a poet may ascribe it to the goddess of wisdom, it being the effect of her inspiration.

The poet, by the introduction of a deity, warns us, that something of importance is to succeed; this is to be ushered in with solemnity, and consequently the appearance of Minerva in this place is not unnecessary: the action of importance to be described is no less than the change of the fortunes of Ulysses; it is from this assembly that his affairs take a new turn, and hasten to a happy re-establishment.

V. 19. *Pallas, with grace divine his form improves.*] This circumstance has been repeated several times almost in the same words, since the beginning of the *Odyssey*. I cannot be of opinion that such repetitions are beauties. In any other poet they might have been thought to proceed from a poverty of invention, though certainly not in Homer, in whom there is rather a superfluity than barrenness. Perhaps having once said a thing well, he despaired of improving it, and so repeated it; or perhaps he intended to inculcate this truth, that all our accomplishments, as beauty, strength, &c. are the gifts of the gods; and being willing to fix it upon the mind, he dwells upon it, and inserts it in many places. Here indeed it has a particular propriety, as it is a circumstance that first engages the Phæacians in the favour of Ulysses: his beauty was his first recommendation, and consequently the poet with great judgment sets his hero off to the best advantage, it being an incident from which he dates all his future happiness; and therefore to be insisted upon with a particular solemnity. Plato in his *Theætetus* applies the latter part of this description to Parmenides. Αἰδοῖός τε μοι φαίνεται εἶναι, ἀμὰ δεινός τε.

V. 35. *Launch the tall bark*] The word in the original is *πρωτοπλοῦς*; which signifies not only a ship that makes its first voyage, but a ship that outsails other ships, as Eustathius observes. It is not possible for a translator to retain such singularities with any beauty; it would seem pedantry and affectation, and not poetry.

• V. 57. *Dear to the muse! who gave his days to flow*

With mighty blessings, mix'd with mighty woe.]

It has been generally thought that Homer represents himself in the person of Demodocus; and Dacier imagines that this passage gave occasion to the ancients to believe that Homer was blind. But that he really was blind is testified by himself in his Hymn to Apollo, which Thucydides asserts to be the genuine production of Homer, and quotes it as such in his history:

Ω κηραι, τις δ' υμῖν ἀνὴρ, ἠδιστ' αἰδῶν,
Εἰθαδὲ πῶλεται; καὶ τῷ τερπείσθε μάλιστα;
Τμεις δ' εὖ μάλα πασαι ὑποκρίνασθε, ἀφ' ὑμεῶν
Τυφλὸς ἀνὴρ

That is, 'O virgins, if any person asks you who is he, the most pleasing of all poets, who frequents this place, and who is he who most delights you? reply, he is a blind man,' &c. It is true, as Eustathius observes, that there are many features in the two poets that bear a great resemblance: Demodocus sings divinely, the same is true of Homer; Demodocus sings the adventures of the Greeks before Troy, so does Homer in his Iliad.

If this be true, it must be allowed that Homer has found out a way of commending himself very artfully: had he spoken plainly, he had been extravagantly vain; but by this indirect way of praise, the reader is at liberty to apply it either solely to Demodocus, or obliquely to Homer.

It is remarkable, that Homer takes a very extraordinary care of Demodocus, his brother poet; and introduces him as a person of great distinction. He calls him in this book the hero Demodocus: he places him on a throne studded with silver, and gives him an herald for his attendant; nor is he less careful to provide for his entertainment, he has a particular table, and a capacious bowl set before him to drink as often as he had a mind, as the original expresses it. Some merry wits have turned the last circumstance into raillery, and insinuate that Homer in this place, as well as in the former, means himself in the person of Demodocus; an intimation, that he would not be displeased to meet with the like hospitality.

V. 74. *The stern debate Atreides hears with joy.*] This passage is not without obscurity, but Eustathius thus explains it from Athenæus: in the Iliad the generals sup with Agamemnon with sobriety and moderation: and if in the Odyssey we see Achilles and Ulysses in contention to the great satisfaction of Agamemnon, it is because these contentions are of use to his affairs; they contend whether force or stratagem is to be employed to take Troy; Achilles after the death of Hector, persuaded to assault it by storm, Ulysses by stratagem. There is a further reason given for the satisfaction which Agamemnon expresses at the contest of these two heroes: before the opening of the war of Troy he consulted the oracle concerning the issue of it; Apollo answered, that Troy should be taken when two princes most renowned, the one for wisdom and the other for valour, should contend at a sacrifice of the gods: Agamemnon rejoices to see the prediction fulfilled, knowing that the destruction of Troy was at hand, the oracle being accomplished by the contest of Ulysses and Achilles.

V. 119. *Euryalus, like Mars terrific, rose.*] I was at a loss for a reason why this figure of terror was introduced amongst an unwarlike nation, upon an occasion contrary to the general description, in the midst of games and diversions. Eustathius takes notice, that the poet distinguishes the character of Euryalus, to force it upon our observation; he being the person who uses Ulysses with roughness and inhumanity, and is the only peer that is described with a sword, which he gives to Ulysses to repair his injury.

He further remarks, that almost all the names of the persons who are mentioned as candidates in these games are borrowed from the sea, Phæacia being an island, and the people greatly addicted to navigation. I have taken the liberty to vary from the order observed by Homer in the catalogue of the names, to avoid the affinity of sound in many of them, as Euryalus, Ocyalus, &c. and too many names being tedious, at least in English poetry, I passed over the three sons of Alcinous, Laodamas, Halius, and Clytoneus, and only mentioned them in general as the sons of Alcinous.

• I was surprised to see Dacier render

..... υἱὸς Πολύνη Τεκτονίδας,

The son of Polyneus the carpenter; it looks like burlesque: it ought to be rendered, The son of Polyneus Tectonides, a Patronymic, and it is so understood by all commentators.

V. 129. *What space the hinds allow*

• *Between the mule and ox, from plough to plough.]*

This image drawn from rural affairs is now become obsolete, and gives us no distinct idea of the distance between Clytoneus and the other racers; but this obscurity arises not from Homer's want of perspicuity, but from the change which has happened in the method of tillage, and from a length of time which has effaced the distinct image which was originally stamped upon it; so that what ~~was~~ understood universally in the days of Homer is grown almost unintelligible to posterity. Eustathius only observes, that the teams of mules were placed at some distance from the teams of oxen; the mule being more swift in his labour than the ox, and consequently more ground was allowed to the mule than the ox by the husbandman. This gives us an idea that Clytoneus was the foremost of the racers, but how much is not to be discovered with any certainty. Aristarchus, as Didymus informs us, thus interprets Homer: 'As much as a yoke of mules set to work at the same time with a yoke of oxen, outgoes the oxen (for mules are swifter than oxen), so much Clytoneus outwent his competitors.' The same description occurs in the tenth book of the Iliad, verse 419, to which passage I refer the reader for a more large and different explication.

V. 149. *By age unbroke!]* It is in the original literally, 'he wants not youth;' this is spoken according to appearance only, for Ulysses must be supposed to be above forty, having spent twenty years in the wars of Troy and in his return to his country. It is true Hesiod calls a person a youth, αἰζων, who was forty years of age, but this must be understood with some allowance, unless we suppose that the life of man was longer in the times of Hesiod, than in these later ages; the contrary of which

appears from many places in Homer, where the shortness of man's life is compared to the leaves of trees, &c. But what the poet here relates is very justifiable, for the youth which Ulysses appears to have proceeds from Minerva; it is not a natural quality, but conferred by the immediate operation of a goddess.

This speech concludes with an address of great beauty: Laodamas invites Ulysses to act in the games, yet at the same time furnishes him with a decent excuse to decline the invitation, if it be against his inclinations; should he refuse, he imputes the refusal to his calamities, not to any want of skill, or personal inability.

V. 190. *And steals with modest violence our souls,*

He speaks reserv'dly, but he speaks with force.]

There is a difficulty in the Greek expression, *ασφαλειως αγορευει, αιδει μελιχιη*; that is, 'he speaks securely with a winning modesty' Dionysius Halicarnassus interprets it, in his Examination of Oratory, to signify that the orator argues 'per concessa,' and so proceeds with certainty, or *ασφαλειως*; without danger of refutation. The word properly signifies without 'stumbling,' *απερσκαπως*, as in the proverb cited by Eustathius, *φορηλοτερον ποσιν ηπαρ γλωττην περσκαποειν*: that is, 'it is better to stumble with the feet than with the tongue.' The words are concise, but of a very extensive comprehension, and take in every thing, both in sentiments and diction, that enters into the character of a complete orator. Dacier concurs in the same interpretation: 'He speaks reservedly, or with caution; he hazards nothing that he would afterwards wish (repentir) to alter. And all his words are full of sweetness and modesty.'

V. 219. *That instant Pallas, bursting from a cloud.]* There is not a passage in the whole Odyssey, where a deity is introduced with less apparent necessity: the goddess of wisdom is brought down from heaven to act what might have been done as well by any of the spectators, namely, to proclaim what was self-evident, the victory of Ulysses. When a deity appears, our expectations are awakened for the introduction of something important, but what action of importance succeeds? It is true, her appearance en-

courages Ulysses, and immediately upon it he challenges the whole Phæacian assembly. But he was already victor, and no further action is performed. If indeed she had appeared openly in favour of Ulysses, this would have been greatly advantageous to him, and the Phæacians must have highly revered a person who was so remarkably honoured by a goddess: but it is not evident that the Phæacians, or even Ulysses, knew the deity, but took her for a man, as she appeared to be; and Ulysses himself immediately rejoices that he had found a friend in the assembly. If this be true, the descent of Pallas will prove very unnecessary; for if she was esteemed to be merely human, she acts nothing in the character of a deity, and performs no more than might have been performed by a man, and consequently gave no greater courage to Ulysses than a friend actually gave, for such only he believed her to be. Eustathius appears to be of the same opinion, for he says the place is to be understood allegorically, and what is thus spoken by a Phæacian with wisdom, is by the poet applied to the goddess of it.

V. 249. *Should a whole host at once discharge the bow,
My well-aim'd shaft with death prevents the foe.]*

There is an ambiguity in the original, and it may imply either, that if Ulysses and his friends were at the same time to aim their arrows against an enemy, his arrow would fly with more certainty and expedition than that of his companions, or that if his enemies had bent all their bows at once against him, yet his shaft would reach his adversary before they could discharge their arrows. Eustathius follows the former, Dacier the latter interpretation. And certainly the latter argues the greater intrepidity and presence of mind: it shews Ulysses in the extremity of danger capable of acting with calmness and serenity, and shooting with the same certainty and steadiness, though multitudes of enemies endanger his life. I have followed this explication, as it is nobler, and shews Ulysses to be a consummate hero.

V. 257. *Vain Eurytus . . .*] This Eurytus was king of Oechalia, famous for his skill in archery; he proposed his daughter Iole in marriage to any person that could conquer him at the ex-

ercise of the bow. Later writers differ from Homer, as Eustathius observes, concerning Eurytus. They write that Hercules overcame him; and he, denying his daughter, was slain, and his daughter made captive by Hercules: whereas Homer writes that he was killed by Apollo, that is, died a sudden death, according to the import of that expression. The ancients differ much about Oechalia; some place it in Eubœa, and some in Messenia, of which opinion is Pausanias. But Homer in the Iliad places it in Thessaly: for he mentions with it Tricca and Ithomè, which, as Dacier observes, were cities of Thessaly.

V. 263. *Sole in the race the contest I decline.*] This is directly contrary to his challenge in the beginning of the speech, where he mentions the race amongst the other games. How then is this difference to be reconciled? Very naturally. Ulysses speaks with a generous warmth, and is transported with anger in the beginning of his oration: here the heat of it is cooled, and consequently reason takes place, and he has time to reflect that a man so disabled by calamities is not an equal match for a younger and less fatigued antagonist. This is an exact representation of human nature; when our passions remit, the vehemence of our speech remits; at first he speaks like a man in anger, here like the wise Ulysses.

It is observable that Ulysses all along maintains a decency and reverence towards the gods, even while his anger seems to be master over his reason; he gives Eurytus as an example of the just vengeance of heaven, and shews himself in a very opposite light: he is so far from contending with the gods, that he allows himself to be inferior to some other heroes: an instance of modesty.

V. 265. *age well may fail,*
When storms and hunger]

This passage appears to me to refer to the late storms and shipwreck, and the long abstinence Ulysses suffered in sailing from Calypso to the Phæacian Island; for when Nausicaa found him, he was almost dead with hunger, as appears from the sixth of the Odyssey. Dacier is of a different opinion, and thinks it relates

to his abstinence and shipwreck upon his leaving Circe, before he came to Calypso. This seems very improbable; for Ulysses had lived seven years with that goddess in great affluence, and consequently must be supposed to have recruited his loss of strength in so long a time, and with the particular care of a goddess: besides Alcinous was acquainted with his late shipwreck, and his daughter Nausicaa was in some degree witness to it: is it not therefore more probable that he should refer to this latter incident, than speak of a calamity that happened seven years past, to which they were entirely strangers?

V. 336. *Prefers his barb'rous Sintians to thy arms!*] The Sintians were the inhabitants of Lemnos, by origin Thracians: Homer calls them barbarous of speech, because their language was a corruption of the Greek, Asiatic, and Thracian. But there is a concealed raillery in the expression, and Mars ridicules the ill taste of Vulcan for leaving so beautiful a goddess to visit his rude and barbarous Sintians. The poet calls Lemnos the favourite isle of Vulcan; this alludes to the subterraneous fires frequent in that island, and he is feigned to have his forge there, as the god of fire. This is likewise the reason why he is said to fall into the island Lemnos when Jupiter threw him from heaven. DACIER.

V. 348. *See the lewd dalliance of the queen of love!*] The original seems to be corrupted: were it to be translated according to the present editions, it must be, 'See the ridiculous deeds of Venus.' I conceive, that few husbands who should take their spouses in such circumstances would have any great appetite to laugh; neither is such an interpretation consonant to the words immediately following *κα επιεικία*. It is therefore very probable that the verse was originally

Δευθ' ἵνα εἰγ' ἀγέλαστα καὶ κα επιεικία ἰδοῖται.

'Come, ye gods, behold the sad and unsufferable deeds of Venus;' and this agrees with the tenour of Vulcan's behaviour in this comedy, who has not the least disposition to be merry with his brother deities.

V. 358. *Till Jove refunds his shameless daughter's dow'r.*] I doubt not but this was the usage of antiquity: it has been ob-

served, that the bridegroom made presents to the father of the bride, which were called *εἵματα*; and if she was afterwards false to his bed, this dower was restored by the father to the husband. Besides this restitution, there seems a pecuniary mulct to have been paid, as appears evident from what follows:

‘ the god of arms
Must pay the penalty for lawless charms.’

Homer in this, as in many other places, seems to allude to the laws of Athens, where death was the punishment of adultery. Pausanias relates, that Draco the Athenian lawgiver granted impunity to any person that took revenge upon an adulterer. Such also was the institution of Solon: ‘ If any one seize an adulterer, let him use him as he pleases:’ *εἰαν τις μοιχὸν λαβὼν, ὅτι αὐτὸν βελήσῃ χρῆσθαι*. And thus Eratosthenes answered a person who begged his life after he had injured his bed, *ἢ ἐγὼ σε ἀποκτενῶ, ἀλλ’ ὁ τοῦ πολέως νόμος*, ‘ It is not I who slay thee, but the law of thy country.’ But still it was in the power of the injured person to take a pecuniary mulct by way of atonement: for thus the same Eratosthenes speaks in Lysias, *ἠτίσθαι καὶ ἰκετεῦ μὴ αὐτὸν κτείνειν, ἀλλ’ ἀργυρίον πρᾶξασθαι*, ‘ He entreated me not to take his life, but exact a sum of money.’ Nay, such penalties were allowed by way of commutation for greater crimes than adultery, as in the case of murder. *Iliad ix.*

‘ If a brother bleed,
On just atonement, we remit the deed:
A sire the slaughter of his son forgives;
The price of blood discharg’d, the murd’rer lives.’

V. 367. *Behold on wrong*
Swift vengeance waits]

Plutarch, in his dissertation upon reading the poets, quotes this as an instance of Homer’s judgment, in closing a ludicrous scene with decency and instruction. He artfully inserts a sentence by which he discovers his own judgment, and lets the reader into the moral of his fables; by this conduct he makes even the representation of evil actions useful, by shewing the shame and detriment they draw upon those who are guilty of them.

V. 386. *He suffers who gives surety for th' unjust.*] This verse is very obscure, and made still more obscure by the explanations of critics. Some think it implies, that it is wicked to be surety for a wicked person; and therefore Neptune should not give his promise for Mars thus taken in adultery. Some take it generally, suretyship is detrimental, and it is the lot of unhappy men to be sureties; the words then are to be construed in the following order, *δειλαι τοι εἶναι, καὶ δειλῶν ἀνδρῶν εἶναι σθαι.* 'Sponsiones sunt infelices, et hominum est infeliciū sponsiones dare.' Others understand it very differently, viz. to imply that the sureties of men of inferior condition should be to men of inferior condition; then the sentence will bear this import: if Mars, says Vulcan, refuses to discharge the penalty, how shall I compel Neptune to pay it, who is so greatly my superior? And therefore adds by way of sentence, that the sponsor ought to be of the same station with the person to whom he becomes surety; or in Latin, 'Simpliciū hominum simplices esse debent sponsores.' I have followed Plutarch, who, in his banquet of the seven wise men, explains it to signify that it is dangerous to be surety for a wicked person, according to the ancient sentence, *εἶναι παρὰ δ' αἴτα.* 'Loss follows suretyship.' Agreeably to the opinion of a much wiser person, 'He that is surety for a stranger shall smart for it; and he that hateth suretyship is sure.' Prov. xi. 15.

V. 394. *Mars to Thrace indignant flies:*

To the soft Cyprian shores the goddess moves.]

There is a reason for this particularity: the Thracians were a war-like people; the poet therefore sends the god of war thither: and the people of Cyprus being effeminate, and addicted to love and pleasures, he feigns the recess of the goddess of love to have been in that island. It is further observable, that he barely mentions the retreat of Mars, but dwells more largely upon the story of Venus. The reason is, the Phæacians had no delight in the god of war, but the soft description of Venus better suited with their inclinations. EUSTATHIUS.

V. 410. *And bending backward whirls it to the sky.]* This is a literal translation of *ἰδνωθεὶς ὀπισθῶ*; and it gives us a lively image

of a person in the act of throwing towards the skies. Eustathius is most learnedly trifling about this exercise of the ball, which was called *οὐρανία*, or aërial; it was a kind of dance, and while they sprung from the ground to catch the ball, they played with their feet in the air after the manner of dancers. He reckons up several other exercises at the ball, *ἀπορραξίς*, *φαινίδα*, *πισκρηθ*, and *ῥεγμαυστρίς*; and explains them all largely. Homer seems to oppose this aërial dance to the common one, *πρὸς χθονί*, or 'on the ground,' which appears to be added to make an evident distinction between the sports; otherwise it is unnecessary; and to dance upon the ground is implied in *ἐκ χειρὸς*, for how should a dance be performed but upon the ground?

V. 450. *And never, never may'st thou want this sword!*] It can scarce be imagined how greatly this beautiful passage is misrepresented by Eustathius. He would have it to imply, 'May I never want this sword,' taking *ταὶ* adverbially: the presents of enemies were reckoned fatal; Ulysses therefore, to avert the omen, prays that he may never have occasion to have recourse to this sword of Euryalus, but keep it amongst his treasures as a testimony of this reconciliation. This appears to be a very forced interpretation, and disagreeable to the general import of the rest of the sentence; he addresses to Euryalus, to whom then can this compliment be naturally paid but to Euryalus? 'Thou hast given me a sword,' says he; 'may thy days be so peaceable as never to want it!' This is an instance of the polite address, and the forgiving temper, of Ulysses.

V. 485. *Clos'd with Circæan art...*] Such passages as these have more of nature than art, and are too narrative, and different from modern ways of speaking, to be capable of much ornament in poetry. Eustathius observes that keys were not in use in these ages, but were afterwards invented by the Lacedæmonians; but they used to bind their carriages with intricate knots. Thus the Gordian knot was famous in antiquity. And this knot of Ulysses became a proverb, to express any insolvable difficulty, *ὅτε οὐδυσσεὺς δεσμός*: this is the reason why he is said to have learned it from Circe; it was of great esteem amongst the ancients, and

not being capable to be untied by human art, the invention of it is ascribed, not to a man, but to a goddess.

A poet would now appear ridiculous if he should introduce a goddess only to teach a hero such an art, as to tie a knot with intricacy: but we must not judge of what has been, from what now is; customs and arts are never at a stay, and consequently the ideas of customs and arts are as changeable as those arts and customs: this knot in all probability was in as high estimation formerly, as the finest watch-work or machines are at this day; and were a person famed for an uncommon skill in such works, it would be no absurdity in the language of poetry, to ascribe his knowledge in them to the assistance of a deity.

V. 510. *To thee, my goddess, I address my vows.*] This may seem an extravagant compliment, especially in the mouth of the wise Ulysses, and rather profane than polite. Dacier commends it as the highest piece of address and gallantry; but perhaps it may want explication to reconcile it to decency. Ulysses only speaks comparatively, and with relation to that one action of her saving his life: 'As therefore, says he, I owe my thanks to the heavens for giving me life originally, so I ought to pay my thanks to thee for preserving it; thou hast been to me as a deity: to preserve a life, is in one sense to give it.' If this appears not to soften the expression sufficiently, it may be ascribed to an overflow of gratitude in the generous disposition of Ulysses; he is so touched with the memory of her benevolence and protection, that his soul labours for an expression great enough to represent it, and no wonder if in this struggle of thought, his words fly out into an excessive but laudable boldness.

V. 519. . . . *From the chine Ulysses carves with art.*] Were this literally to be translated, it would be that Ulysses cut a piece from the chine of the white-toothed boar, round which there was much fat. This looks like burlesque to a person unacquainted with the usages of antiquity: but it was the highest honour that could be paid to Demodocus. The greatest heroes in the Iliad are thus rewarded after victory, and it was esteemed an equivalent for all dangers. So that what Ulysses here offers to the poet, is offered out of a particular regard and honour to his poetry.

V. 531. . . . *Thy soul the muse inspires,
Or Phœbus animates with all his fires.]*

Ulysses here ascribes the songs of Demodocus to immediate inspiration; and Apollo is made the patron of the poets, as Eustathius observes, because he is the god of prophecy. He adds, that Homer here again represents himself in the person of Demodocus: it is he who wrote the war of Troy with as much faithfulness, as if he had been present at it; it is he who had little or no assistance from former relations of that story, and consequently receives it from Apollo and the muses. This is a secret but artful insinuation that we are not to look upon the Iliad as all fiction and fable, but in general as a real history, related with as much certainty as if the poet had been present at those memorable actions.

Plutarch, in his chapter of reading poems, admires the conduct of Homer with relation to Ulysses: he diverts Demodocus from idle fables, and gives him a noble theme, the destruction of Troy. Such subjects suit well with the sage character of Ulysses. It is for the same reason that he here passes over in silence the amour of Mars and Venus, and commends the song at the beginning of this book, concerning the contention of the worthies before Troy: an instruction, what songs a wise man ought to hear, and that poets should recite nothing but what may be heard by a wise man.

V. 604. *In wondrous ships self-mov'd, instinct with mind.]*
There is not a passage that more outrages all the rules of credibility than the description of these ships of Alcinous. The poet inserts these wonders only to shew the great dexterity of the Phæacians in navigation; and indeed it was necessary to be very full in the description of their skill, who were to convey Ulysses home in despite of the very god of the ocean. It is for the same reason that they are described as sailing almost invisibly, to escape the notice of that god. Antiquity animated every thing in poetry; thus Argo is said to have had a mast made of Dodonæan oak, endued with the faculty of speech. But this is defending one absurdity, by instancing in a fable equally absurd: all that can be said in defence of it is, that such extravagant fables were believed,

at least by the vulgar, in former ages; and consequently might be introduced without blame in poetry; if so, by whom could a boast of this nature be better made, than by a vain Phæacian? Besides, these extravagancies let Ulysses into the humour of the Phæacians, and in the following books he adapts his story to it, and returns fable for fable. It must likewise certainly be a great encouragement to Ulysses to find himself in such hands as could so easily restore him to his country: for it was natural to conclude, that though Alcinous was guilty of great amplification, yet that his subjects were very expert navigators.

V. 619. *How, by his command,
Firm rooted in a surge a ship should stand.]*

The ancients, as Eustathius observes, mark these verses with an obelisk and asterism. The obelisk shewed that they judged what relates to the oracle was misplaced, the asterism denoted that they thought the verses very beautiful. For they thought it not probable that Alcinous would have called to memory this prediction and the menace of Neptune, and yet persisted to conduct to his own country the enemy of that deity: whereas if this oracle be supposed to be forgotten by Alcinous, (as it will, if these verses be taken away) then there will be an appearance of truth, that he who was a friend to all strangers, should be persuaded to land so great and worthy an hero as Ulysses in his own dominions; and therefore they reject them to the 13th of the Odyssey. But, as Eustathius observes, Alcinous immediately subjoins,

‘ But this the gods may frustrate or fulfil;
As suits the purpose of th’ eternal will.’

And therefore the verses may be very proper in this book, for Alcinous believes that the gods might be prevailed upon not to fulfil this denunciation. It has been likewise remarked that the conduct of Alcinous is very justifiable: the Phæacians had been warned by an oracle, that an evil threatened them for the care they should shew to a stranger: yet they forbear not to perform an act of piety to Ulysses, being persuaded that men ought to do their duty, and trust the issue to the goodness of the gods. This

will seem to be more probable, if we remember Alcinous is ignorant that Ulysses is the person intended by the prediction, so that he is not guilty of a voluntary opposition to the gods, but really acts with piety in assisting his guest, and only complies with the common laws of hospitality.

It is but a conjecture, yet it is not without probability,⁶ that there was a rock which looked like a vessel, in the entrance of the haven of the Phæacians; the fable may be built upon this foundation, and because it was environed by the ocean, the transformation might be ascribed to the god of it.

V. 621. *How mound on mound*

Should bury these proud tow'rs beneath the ground.]

The Greek word is *αμφιαλυσειν*, which does not necessarily imply that the city should be buried actually, but that a mountain should surround it, or cover it round; and in the thirteenth book we find that when the ship was transformed into a rock, the city continues out of danger. Eustathius is fully of opinion, that the city was threatened to be overwhelmed by a mountain: the poet, says he, invents this fiction to prevent posterity from searching after this isle of the Phæacians, and to preserve his story from detection of falsification; after the same manner as he introduces Neptune and the rivers of Troy bearing away the wall which the Greeks had raised as a fortification before their navy. But Dacier, in the omissions which she inserts at the end of the second volume of her *Odyssey*, is of a contrary opinion, for the mountain is not said to cover the city, but to threaten to cover it: as appears from the thirteenth book of the *Odyssey*, where Alcinous commands a sacrifice to the gods to avert the execution of this denunciation.

But the difference in reality is small, the city is equally threatened to be buried, as the vessel to be transformed; and therefore Alcinous might pronounce the same fate to both, since both were threatened equally by the prediction: it was indeed impossible for him to speak after any other manner, for he only repeats the words of the oracle, and cannot foresee that the sacrifice of the Phæacians would appease the anger of Neptune.

¶. 635. *Or bled some friend, who bore a brother's part,
And claim'd by merit, not by blood, the heart!?*]

This excellent sentence of Homer at once guides us in the choice, and instructs us in the regard, that is to be paid to the person of a friend. If it be lawful to judge of a man from his writings, Homer had a soul susceptible of real friendship, and was a lover of sincerity. It would be endless to take notice of every casual instruction inserted in the *Odyssey*; but such sentences shew Homer to have been a man of an amiable character as well as excellent in poetry; the great abhorrence he had of lies cannot be more strongly expressed than in those two passages of the ninth *Iliad*, and in the fourteenth *Odyssey*: in the first of which he makes the man of the greatest soul, Achilles, bear testimony to his aversion of them; and in the latter declares, that 'the poorest man, though compelled by the utmost necessity, ought not to stoop to such a practice.' In this place he shews that worth creates a kind of relation, and that we are to look upon a worthy friend as a brother.

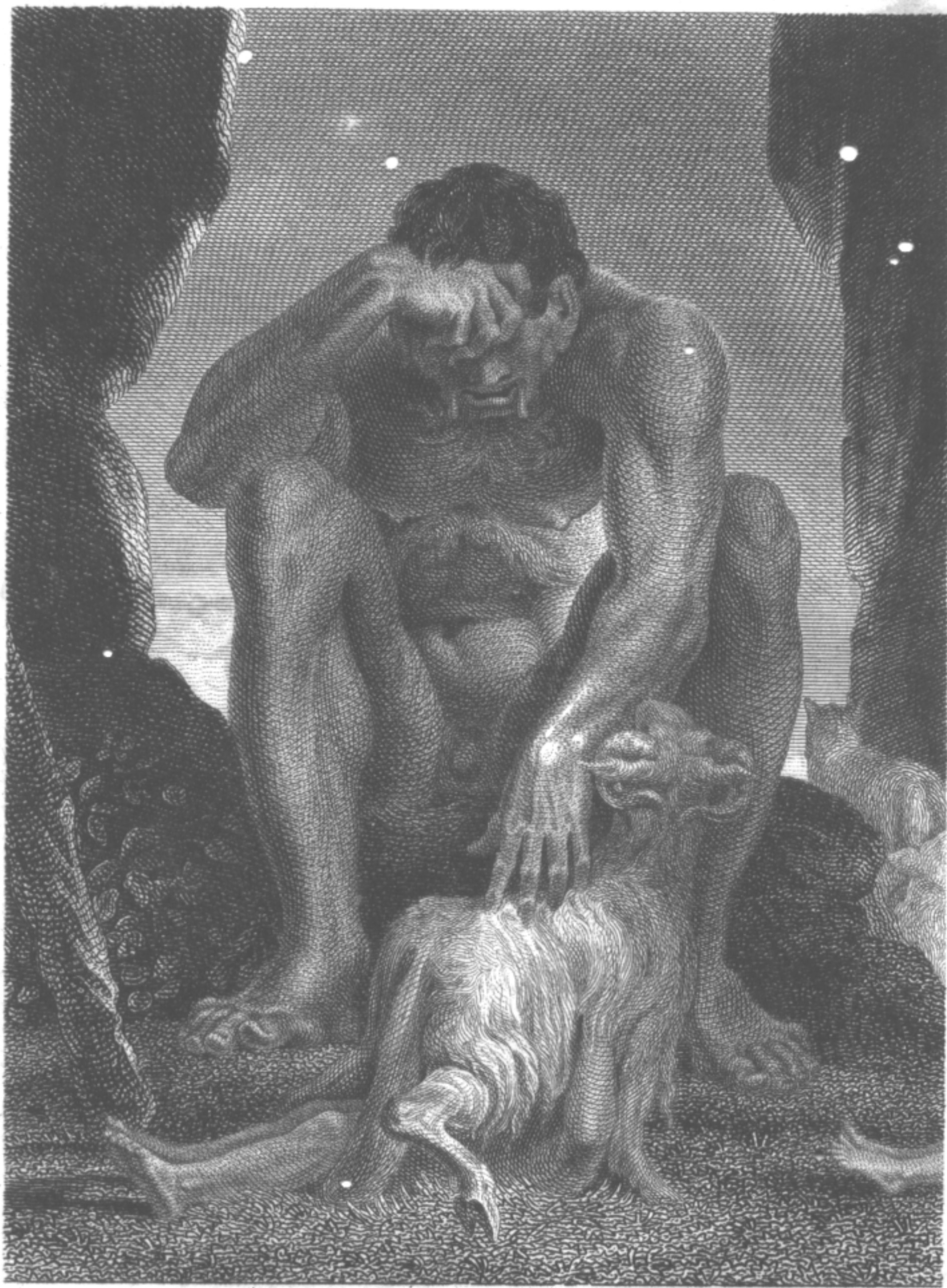
This book takes up the whole thirty-third day, and part of the evening; for the council opens in the morning, and at sun-setting the Phæacians return to the palace from the games; after which Ulysses bathes and sups, and spends some time of the evening in discoursing, and hearing the songs of Demodocus. Then Alcinous requests him to relate his own story, which he begins in the next book, and continues it through the four subsequent books of the *Odyssey*.

THE
NINTH BOOK
OF THE
ODYSSEY.

THE ARGUMENT.

THE ADVENTURES OF THE CICONI, LOTOPHAGI, AND CYCLOPS.

ULYSSES begins the relation of his adventures ; how, after the destruction of Troy, he with his companions made an incursion on the Ciconi, by whom they were repulsed ; and meeting with a storm, were driven to the coast of the Lotophagi. From thence they sailed to the land of the Cyclops, whose manners and situation are particularly characterized. The giant Polyphemus and his cave described ; the usage Ulysses and his companions met with there ; and lastly, the method and artifice by which he escaped.



Painted by H. Fuseli R.A.

Engraved by T. G. Walker.

BOOK IX.

THEN thus Ulysses: Thou, whom first in sway,
As first in virtue, these thy realms obey;
How sweet the products of a peaceful reign!
The heav'n-taught poet, and enchanting strain;
The well-fill'd palace, the perpetual feast, 5
A land rejoicing, and a people blest!

How goodly seems it, ever to employ
Man's social days in union and in joy;
The plenteous board high-heap'd with cates divine,
And o'er the foaming bowl the laughing wine! 10

Amid these joys, why seeks thy mind to know
Th' unhappy series of a wand'rer's woe;
Remembrance sad, whose image to review,
Alas! must open all my wounds anew?
And oh, what first, what last shall I relate, 15
Of woes unnumber'd sent by heav'n and fate?

Know first the man (tho' now a wretch distress'd)
Who hopes thee, monarch, for his future guest:
Behold Ulysses! no ignoble name,
Earth sounds my wisdom, and high heav'n my fame.

My native soil is Ithaca the fair, 21
 Where high Neritus waves his woods in air:
 Dulichium, Samè, and Zacynthus crown'd
 With shady mountains, spread their isles around.
 (These to the north and night's dark regions run,
 Those to Aurora and the rising sun.) 26
 Low lies our isle, yet bless'd in fruitful stores;
 Strong are her sons, though rocky are her shores;
 And none, ah none so lovely to my sight,
 Of all the lands that heav'n o'erspreads with light!
 In vain Calypso long constrain'd my stay,
 With sweet, reluctant, amorous delay;
 With all her charms as vainly Circe strove,
 And added magic, to secure my love.
 In pomps or joys, the palace or the grot, 35
 My country's image never was forgot,
 My absent parents rose before my sight,
 And distant lay contentment and delight.

Hear then the woes, which mighty Jove ordain'd
 To wait my passage from the Trojan land. 40
 The winds from Ilion to the Cicons' shore,
 Beneath cold Ismarus, our vessels bore.
 We boldly landed on the hostile place,
 And sack'd the city, and destroy'd the race,

Their wives made captive, their possessions shar'd,
And ev'ry soldier found a like reward. 46

I then advis'd to fly; not so the rest,
Who staid to revel, and prolong the feast:
The fatted sheep and sable bulls they slay,
And bowls fly round, and riot wastes the day. 50

Meantime the Cicons, to their holds retir'd,
Call on the Cicons, with new fury fir'd;
With early morn the gather'd country swarms,
And all the continent is bright with arms;
Thick as the budding leaves or rising flow'rs 55
O'erspread the land, when spring descends in
show'rs:

All expert soldiers, skill'd on foot to dare,
Or from the bounding courser urge the war.
Now fortune changes (so the fates ordain),
Our hour was come to taste our share of pain. 60
Close at the ships the bloody fight began,
Wounded they wound, and man expires on man.
Long as the morning sun increasing bright
O'er heav'n's pure azure spread the growing light,
Promiscuous death the form of war confounds, 65
Each adverse battle go'd with equal wounds:
But when his ev'ning wheels o'erhung the main,
Then conquest crown'd the fierce Ciconian train.

Six brave companions from each ship we lost,
 The rest escape in haste, and quit the coast. 70
 With sails outspread we fly th' unequal strife,
 Sad for their loss, but joyful of our life.
 Yet as we fled, our fellows' rites we paid,
 And thrice we call'd on each unhappy shade.

Meanwhile the god, whose hand the thunder
 forms, 75
 Drives clouds on clouds, and blackens heav'n with
 storms:

Wide o'er the waste the rage of Boreas sweeps,
 And night rush'd headlong on the shaded deeps.
 Now here, now there, the giddy ships are borne,
 And all the rattling shrouds in fragments torn. 80
 We furl'd the sail, we plied the lab'ring oar,
 Took down our masts, and row'd our ships to shore.
 Two tedious days and two long nights we lay,
 O'erwatch'd and batter'd in the naked bay.
 But the third morning when Aurora brings, 85
 We rear the masts, we spread the canvas wings;
 Refresh'd, and careless on the deck reclin'd,
 We sit, and trust the pilot and the wind.
 Then to my native country had I sail'd:
 But the cape doubled, adverse winds prevail'd. 90

Strong was the tide, which by the northern blast
 Impell'd, our vessels on Cythera cast.
 Nine days our fleet th' uncertain tempest bore
 Far in wide ocean, and from sight of shore :
 The tenth we touch'd, by various errors tost, 95
 The land of Lotos, and the flow'ry coast.
 We climb'd the beach, and springs of water found,
 Then spread our hasty banquet on the ground.
 Three men were sent, deputed from the crew,
 (An herald one) the dubious coast to view, 100
 And learn what habitants possess'd the place.
 They went, and found a hospitable race;
 Not prone to ill, nor strange to foreign guest,
 They eat, they drink, and nature gives the feast;
 The trees around them, all their fruit produce; 105
 Lotos, the name; divine, nectareous juice!
 (Thence call'd Lotophagi) which whoso tastes,
 Insatiate riots in the sweet repasts,
 Nor other home nor other care intends, 109
 But quits his house, his country, and his friends:
 The three we sent, from off th' enchanting ground
 We dragg'd reluctant, and by force we bound:
 The rest in haste forsook the pleasing shore,
 Or, the charm tasted, had return'd no more. 114

Now plac'd in order on their banks, they sweep
 The sea's smooth face, and cleave the hoary deep;
 With heavy hearts we labour through the tide,
 To coasts unknown, and oceans yet untried.

The land of Cyclops first; a savage kind,
 Nor tam'd by manners, nor by laws confin'd: 120
 Untaught to plant, to turn the glebe and sow;
 They all their products to free nature owe.

The soil untill'd a ready harvest yields,
 With wheat and barley wave the golden fields,
 Spontaneous wines from weighty clusters pour,
 And Jove descends in each prolific show'r. 126

By these no statutes and no rights are known,
 No council held, no monarch fills the throne,
 But high on hills or airy cliffs they dwell,
 Or deep in caves whose entrance leads to hell. 130
 Each rules his race, his neighbour not his care,
 Heedless of others, to his own severe.

Oppos'd to the Cyclopean coasts, there lay
 An isle, whose hills their subject fields survey;
 Its name Lachæa, crown'd with many a grove, 135
 Where savage goats thro' pathless thickets rove:
 No needy mortals here, with hunger bold,
 Or wretched hunters, through the wint'ry cold,

Pursue their flight; but leave them safe to bound
 From hill to hill, o'er all the desert ground. 140
 Nor knows the soil to feed the fleecy care,
 Or feels the labours of the crooked share;
 But uninhabited, untill'd, unsown
 It lies, and breeds the bleating goat alone.
 For there no vessel with vermilion prore, 145
 Or bark of traffick, glides from shore to shore;
 The rugged race of savages, unskill'd
 The seas to traverse, or the ships to build,
 Gaze on the coast, nor cultivate the soil;
 Unlearn'd in all th' industrious arts of toil. 150
 Yet here all products and all plants abound,
 Sprung from the fruitful genius of the ground;
 Fields waving high with heavy crops are seen,
 And vines that flourish in eternal green,
 Refreshing meads along the murm'ring main, 155
 And fountains streaming down the fruitful plain.
 A port there is, enclos'd on either side,
 Where ships may rest, unanchor'd and untied,
 Till the glad mariners incline to sail,
 And the sea whitens with the rising gale. 160
 High at its head, from out the cavern'd rock
 In living rills a gushing fountain broke:

Around it, and above, for ever green
 The bushing alders form'd a shady scene.
 Hither some fav'ring god, beyond our thought,
 Through all-surrounding shade our navy brought;
 For gloomy night descended on the main,
 Nor glimmer'd Phœbe in th' ethereal plain:
 But all unseen the clouded island lay,
 And all unseen the surge and rolling sea, 170
 Till safe we anchor'd in the shelter'd bay.
 Our sails we gather'd, cast our cables o'er,
 And slept secure along the sandy shore.
 Soon as again the rosy morning shone,
 Reveal'd the landscape and the scene unknown,
 With wonder seiz'd we view the pleasing ground,
 And walk delighted, and expatiate round.
 Rous'd by the woodland nymphs, at early dawn,
 The mountain goats came bounding o'er the lawn:
 In haste our fellows to the ships repair, 180
 For arms and weapons of the silvan war;
 Straight in three squadrons all our crew we part,
 And bend the bow, or wing the missile dart:
 The bounteous gods afford a copious prey,
 And nine fat goats each vessel bears away; 185
 The royal bark had ten. Our ships complete
 We thus supplied (for twelve were all the fleet).

Here, till the setting sun roll'd down the light,
 We sat indulging in the genial rite:
 Nor wines were wanting; those from ample jars
 We'drain'd, the prize of our Ciconian wars.
 The land of Cyclops lay in prospect near;
 The voice of goats and bleating flocks we hear,
 And from their mountains rising smokes appear.
 Now sunk the sun, and darkness cover'd o'er. 195
 The face of things: along the sea-beat shore
 Sate we slept: but when the sacred dawn
 Arising, glitter'd o'er the dewy lawn,
 I call'd my fellows, and these words addrest:
 My dear associates, here indulge your rest; 200
 While, with my single ship, advent'rous I
 Go forth, the manners of yon men to try;
 Whether a race unjust, of barb'rous might,
 Rude, and unconscious of a stranger's right;
 Or such who harbour pity in their breast, 205
 Revere the gods, and succour the distress?

This said, I climb my vessel's lofty side;
 My train obey'd me and the ship untied.
 In order seated on their banks, they sweep
 Neptune's smooth face, and cleave the yielding
 deep. 210

When to the nearest verge of land we drew,
 Fast by the sea a lonely cave we view,
 High, and with dark'ning laurels cover'd o'er;
 Where sheep and goats lay slumb'ring round the
 shore.

Near this, a fence of marble from the rock, 215
 Brown with o'er-arching pine, and spreading oak.
 A giant-shepherd here his flock maintains
 Far from the rest, and solitary reigns,
 In shelter thick of horrid shade reclin'd;
 And gloomy mischiefs labour in his mind. 220
 A form enormous! far unlike the race
 Of human birth, in stature, or in face;
 As some lone mountain's monstrous growth he
 stood,

Crown'd with rough thickets, and a nodding wood.
 I left my vessel at the point of land, 225
 And close to guard it, gave our crew command:
 With only twelve, the boldest and the best,
 I seek th' adventure, and forsake the rest.
 Then took a goatskin fill'd with precious wine,
 The gift of Maron of Evanthus' line 230
 (The priest of Phœbus at th' Ismarian shrine).
 In sacred shade his honour'd mansion stood
 Amidst Apollo's consecrated wood;

Him, and his house, heav'n mov'd my mind to save,
 And costly presents in return he gave; 235
 Sev'n golden talents to perfection wrought,
 A silver bowl that held a copious draught,
 And twelve large vessels of unmingled wine,
 Mellifluous, undecaying, and divine!
 Which now some ages from his race conceal'd,
 The hoary sire in gratitude reveal'd: 241
 Such was the wine; to quench whose fervent steam,
 Scarce twenty measures from the living stream
 To cool one cup suffic'd: the goblet crown'd
 Breath'd aromatic fragrances around. 245
 Of this an ample vase we heav'd aboard,
 And brought another with provisions stor'd.
 My soul foreboded I should find the bow'r
 Of some fell monster, fierce with barb'rous pow'r,
 Some rustic wretch, who liv'd in heav'n's despite,
 Contemning laws, and trampling on the right. 251
 The cave we found, but vacant all within,
 (His flock the giant tended on the green)
 But round the grot we gaze; and all we view,
 In order rang'd, our admiration drew: 255
 The bending shelves with loads of cheeses prest,
 The folded flocks each sep'rate from the rest

(The larger here, and there the lesser lambs,
 The new-fall'n young here bleating for their dams;
 The kid distinguish'd from the lambkin lies): 260
 The cavern echoes with responsive cries.

Capacious chargers all around were laid,
 Full pails, and vessels of the milking trade.
 With fresh provisions hence our fleet to store
 My friends advise me, and to quit the shore; 265
 Or drive a flock of sheep and goats away,
 Consult our safety, and put off to sea.

Their wholesome counsel rashly I declin'd,
 Curious to view the man of monstrous kind,
 And try what social rites a savage lends: 270
 Dire rites, alas! and fatal to my friends!

Then first a fire we kindle, and prepare
 For his return with sacrifice and pray'r.
 The loaden shelves afford us full repast;
 We sit expecting. Lo! he comes at last. 275
 Near half a forest on his back he bore,
 And cast the pond'rous burden at the door.
 It thunder'd as it fell. We trembled then,
 And sought the deep recesses of the den.
 Now driv'n before him, through the arching rock,
 Came tumbling, heaps on heaps, th' unnumber'd
 flock; 281

Big-udder'd ewes, and goats of female kind
(The males were penn'd in outward courts behind).
Then, heav'd on high, a rock's enormous weight
To the cave's mouth he roll'd, and clos'd the gate.
(Scarce twenty four-wheel'd cars, compact and
strong,

The massy load could bear, or roll along.)
He next betakes him to his ev'ning cares,
And sitting down, to milk his flocks prepares;
Of half their udders eases first the dams, 290
Then to the mother's teat submits the lambs.

Half the white stream to hard'ning cheese he prest,
And high in wicker-baskets heap'd : the rest,
Reserv'd in bowls, supply'd the nightly feast.
His labour done, he fir'd the pile that gave 295
A sudden blaze, and lighted all the cave.

We stand discover'd by the rising fires;
Askance the giant glares, and thus inquires:

What are ye, guests; on what adventure, say,
Thus far ye wander through the wat'ry way? 300
Pirates perhaps, who seek through seas unknown
The lives of others, and expose your own?

His voice like thunder thro' the cavern sounds:
My bold companions thrilling fear confounds,

Appall'd at sight of more than mortal man! 305

At length, with heart recover'd, I began:

From Troy's fam'd fields, sad wand'ers o'er the
main, o

Behold the relics of the Grecian train!

Through various seas by various perils tost,

And forc'd by storms, unwilling, on your coast;

Far from our destin'd course, and native land, 311

Such was our fate, and such high Jove's command!

Nor what we are befits us to disclaim,

Atrides' friends (in arms a mighty name),

Who taught proud Troy and all her sons to bow;

Victors of late, but humble suppliants now! 316

Low at thy knee thy succour we implore;

Respect us, human, and relieve us, poor.

At least some hospitable gift bestow;

'Tis what the happy to th' unhappy owe: 320

'Tis what the gods require: those gods revere,

The poor and stranger are their constant care;

To Jove their cause, and their revenge belongs,

He wanders with them, and he feels their wrongs.

Fools that ye are! (the savage thus replies, 325

His inward fury blazing at his eyes)

Or strangers, distant far from our abodes,

To bid me rev'rence or regard the gods.

Know then we Cyclops are a race, above 329
 Those air-bred people, and their goat-nurs'd Jove:
 And learn, our pow'r proceeds with thee and thine,
 Not as he wills, but as ourselves incline.

But answer, the good ship that brought ye o'er,
 Where lies she anchor'd? near or off the shore?

Thus he. His meditated fraud I find, 335
 (Vers'd in the turns of various humankind)

And cautious, thus: Against a dreadful rock,
 Fast by your shore the gallant vessel broke:
 Scarce with these few I 'scap'd; of all my train,
 Whom angry Neptune whelm'd beneath the main;
 The scatter'd wreck the winds blew back again. 341

He answer'd with his deed. His bloody hand
 Snatch'd two, unhappy! of my martial band,
 And dash'd like dogs against the stony floor:
 The pavement swims with brains and mingled gore.
 Torn limb from limb, he spreads his horrid feast,
 And fierce devours it like a mountain beast:
 He sucks the marrow, and the blood he drains,
 Nor entrails, flesh, nor solid bone remains. 349
 We see the death from which we cannot move,
 And humbled groan beneath the hand of Jove.
 His ample maw with human carnage fill'd,
 A milky deluge next the giant swill'd;

Then stretch'd in length o'er half the cavern'd rock,
Lay senseless, and supine, amidst the flock. 355

To seize the time, and with a sudden wound
To fix the slumb'ring monster to the ground,
My soul impels me; and in act I stand
To draw the sword; but wisdom held my hand.

A deed so rash had finish'd all our fate; 360
No mortal forces from the lofty gate
Could roll the rock. In hopeless grief we lay,
And sigh, expecting the return of day.

Now did the rosy-finger'd morn arise,
And shed her sacred light along the skies. 365

He wakes, he lights the fire, he milks the dams,
And to the mother's teat submits the lambs.

The task thus finish'd of his morning hours,
Two more he snatches, murders, and devours.

Then pleas'd and whistling, drives his flock before;
Removes the rocky mountain from the door, 371

And shuts again: with equal ease dispos'd,
As a light quiver's lid is op'd and clos'd.

His giant voice the echoing region fills:

His flocks, obedient, spread o'er all the hills. 375

Thus left behind, e'en in the last despair,
I thought, devis'd, and Pallas heard my pray'r.

Revenge, and doubt, and caution work'd my breast;
 But this of many counsels seem'd the best;
 The monster's club within the cave I spy'd, 380
 A tree of stateliest growth, and yet undry'd,
 Green from the wood; of height and bulk so vast,
 The largest ship might claim it for a mast.
 This shorten'd of its top, I gave my train
 A fathom's length, to shape it and to plane; 385
 The narrow'r end I sharpen'd to a spire;
 Whose point we harden'd with the force of fire,
 And hid it in the dust that strow'd the cave.
 Then to my few companions, bold and brave,
 Propos'd, who first the vent'rous deed should try,
 In the broad orbit of his monstrous eye 391
 To plunge the brand, and twirl the pointed wood,
 When slumber next should tame the man of blood.
 Just as I wish'd, the lots were cast on four:
 Myself the fifth. We stand and wait the hour.
 He comes with ev'ning: all his fleecy flock 396
 Before him march, and pour into the rock;
 Not one, or male or female, staid behind:
 (So fortune chanc'd, or so some god design'd)
 Then heaving high the stone's unwieldy weight,
 He roll'd it on the cave, and clos'd the gate. 401

First down he sits, to milk the woolly dams,
 And then permits their udder to the lambs.
 Next seiz'd two wretches more, and headlong cast,
 Brain'd on the rock; his second dire repast. 405
 I then approach'd him reeking with their gore,
 And held the brimming goblet foaming o'er:
 Cyclop! since human flesh has been thy feast,
 Now drain this goblet, potent to digest:
 Know hence what treasures in our ship we lost,
 And what rich liquors other climates boast. 411
 We to thy shore the precious freight shall bear,
 If home thou send us, and vouchsafe to spare.
 But oh! thus furious, thirsting thus for gore,
 The sons of men shall ne'er approach thy shore,
 And never shalt thou taste this nectar more. 416

He heard, he took, and pouring down his throat
 Delighted, swill'd the large luxurious draught.
 More! give me more, he cried: the boon be thine,
 Whoe'er thou art, that bear'st celestial wine! 420
 Declare thy name; not mortal is this juice,
 Such as th' unblest Cyclopean climes produce,
 (Though sure our vine the largest cluster yields,
 And Jove's scorn'd thunder serves to drench our
 fields)

But this descended from the blest abodes, 425
A rill of nectar, streaming from the gods.

He said, and greedy grasp'd the heady bowl,
Thrice drain'd, and pour'd the deluge on his soul.

His sense lay cover'd with the dozy fume;
While thus my fraudulent speech I reassume: 430

Thy promis'd boon, O Cyclop! now I claim,
And plead my title: Noman is my name.

By that distinguish'd from my tender years,
'Tis what my parents call me, and my peers.

The giant then: Our promis'd grace receive,
The hospitable boon we mean to give: 436
When all thy wretched crew have felt my pow'r,
Noman shall be the last I will devour.

He said: then nodding with the fumes of wine
Dropt his huge head, and snoring lay supine. 440
His neck obliquely o'er his shoulders hung,
Press'd with the weight of sleep that tames the
strong!

There belch'd the mingled steams of wine and
blood,

And human flesh, his indigested food.

Sudden I stir the embers, and inspire 445
With animating breath the seeds of fire;

Each drooping spirit with bold words repair,
 And urge my train the dreadful deed to dare.
 The stake now glow'd beneath the burning bed
 (Green as it was) and sparkled fiery red. 450
 Then forth the vengeful instrument I bring;
 With beating hearts my fellows form a ring.
 Urg'd by some present god, they swift let fall
 The pointed torment on his visual ball.
 Myself above them from a rising ground 455
 Guide the sharp stake, and twirl it round and
 round.

As when a shipwright stands his workmen o'er,
 Who ply the whimble, some huge beam to bore;
 Urg'd on all hands it nimbly spins about,
 The grain deep-piercing till it scoops it out: 460
 In his broad eye so whirls the fiery wood;
 From the pierc'd pupil spouts the boiling blood;
 Sing'd are his brows; the scorching lids grow black;
 The gelly bubbles, and the fibres crack.
 And as when arm'ers temper in the ford 465
 The keen-edg'd pole-ax, or the shining sword,
 The red-hot metal hisses in the lake:
 Thus in his eye-ball hiss'd the plunging stake.
 He sends a dreadful groan: the rocks around
 Thro' all their inmost winding caves resound. 470

Scar'd we receded. Forth, with frantic hand,
 He tore and dash'd on earth the gory brand:
 Then calls the Cyclops, all that round him dwell,
 With voice like thunder, and a direful yell.

From all their dens the one-ey'd race repair, 475

From rifted rocks, and mountains bleak in air.

All haste assembled, at his well-known roar,

Enquire the cause, and crowd the cavern door.

What hurts thee, Polypheme? what strange
 affright 479

Thus breaks our slumbers, and disturbs the night?

Does any mortal in th' unguarded hour

Of sleep oppress thee, or by fraud or pow'r?

Or thieves insidious the fair flock surprise?

Thus they. The Cyclop from his den replies:

Friends, Noman kills me; Noman in the hour
 Of sleep oppresses me with fraudulent pow'r. 486

'If no man hurt thee, but the hand divine

Inflict disease, it fits thee to resign:

To Jove or to thy father Neptune pray,'

The brethren cried, and instant strode away. 490

Joy touch'd my secret soul and conscious
 heart,

Pleas'd with th' effect of conduct and of art.

Meantime the Cyclop, raging with his wound,
 Spreads his wide arms, and searches round and
 round:

At last, the stone removing from the gate, 495
 With hands extended in the midst he sat;
 And search'd each passing sheep, and felt it o'er,
 Secure to seize us ere we reach'd the door.
 (Such as his shallow wit, he deem'd was mine)
 But secret I revolv'd the deep design; 500
 'Twas for our lives my lab'ring bosom wrought;
 Each scheme I turn'd, and sharpen'd ev'ry thought;
 This way and that I cast, to save my friends,
 Till one resolve my varying counsel ends.

Strong were the rams, with native purple fair,
 Well fed, and largest of the fleecy care.
 These three and three, with osier bands we ty'd;
 (The twining bands the Cyclop's bed supply'd)
 The midmost bore a man; the outward two
 Secur'd each side: so bound we all the crew. 510
 One ram remain'd, the leader of the flock;
 In his deep fleece my grasping hands I lock,
 And fast beneath, in woolly curls inwove,
 There cling implicit, and confide in Jove.
 When rosy morning glimmer'd o'er the dales,
 He drove to pasture all the lusty males: 516

The ewes still folded, with distended thighs
 Unmilk'd, lay bleating in distressful cries,
 But heedless of those cares, with anguish stung,
 He felt their fleeces as they pass'd along: 520
 (Fool that he was) and let them safely go,
 All unsuspecting of their freight below.

The master-ram at last approach'd the gate,
 Charg'd with his wool, and with Ulysses' fate.
 Him, while he pass'd, the monster blind bespoke:
 What makes my ram the lag of all the flock? 526
 First thou wert wont to crop the flow'ry mead,
 First to the field and river's bank to lead,
 And first with stately step at ev'ning hour
 Thy fleecy fellows usher to their bow'r. 530
 Now far the last, with pensive pace and slow
 Thou mov'st, as conscious of thy master's woe!
 Seest thou these lids that now unfold in vain?
 (The deed of Noman and his wicked train)
 Oh! didst thou feel for thy afflicted lord, 535
 And would but fate the pow'r of speech afford;
 Soon might'st thou tell me, where in secret here
 The ~~bastard~~ ^{bastard} lurks, all trembling with his fear:
 Swung round and round, and dash'd from rock to
 rock,
 His batter'd brains should on the pavement smoke.

No ease, no pleasure my sad heart receives, 541
While such a monster as vile Noman lives.

The giant spoke, and through the hollow rock
Dismiss'd the ram, the father of the flock.

No sooner freed, and through th' enclosure past,
First I release myself, my fellows last: 546

Fat sheep and goats in throngs we drive before,
And reach our vessel on the winding shore.

With joy the sailors view their friends return'd,
And hail us living whom as dead they mourn'd.

Big tears of transport stand in ev'ry eye: 551

I check their fondness, and command to fly.

Aboard in haste they heave the wealthy sheep,
And snatch their oars, and rush into the deep.

Now off at sea, and from the shallows clear,
As far as human voice could reach the ear; 556

With taunts the distant giant I accost,

Hear me, O Cyclop! hear ungracious host!

'Twas on no coward, no ignoble slave,

Thou meditat'st thy meal in yonder cave; 560

But one, the vengeance fated from above

Doom'd to inflict; the instrument of Jove—

Thy barb'rous breach of hospitable bands,

The god, the god revenges by my hands.

These words the Cyclop's burning rage provoke:
 From the tall hill he rends a pointed rock; 566
 High o'er the billows flew the massy load,
 And near the ship came thund'ring on the flood.
 It almost brush'd the helm, and fell before:
 The whole sea shook, and reflux beat the shore.
 The strong concussion on the heaving tide 571
 Roll'd back the vessel to the island's side:
 Again I shov'd her off; our fate to fly,
 Each nerve we stretch, and ev'ry oar we ply.
 Just 'scap'd impending death, when now again
 We twice as far had furrow'd back the main, 576
 Once more I raise my voice; my friends afraid
 With mild entreaties my design dissuade:
 What boots the godless giant to provoke,
 Whose arm may sink us at a single stroke? 580
 Already, when the dreadful rock he threw,
 Old Ocean shook, and back his surges flew.
 The sounding voice directs his aim again;
 The rock o'erwhelms us, and we 'scap'd in vain.
 But I, of mind elate, and scorning fear, 585
 Thus with new taunts insult the monster's ear:
 Cyclop! if any, pitying thy disgrace,
 Ask who disfigur'd thus that eyeless face?

Say 'twas Ulysses; 'twas his deed, declare,
 Laertes' son, of Ithaca the fair; 590
 Ulysses, far in fighting fields renown'd,
 Before whose arm Troy tumbled to the ground.

Th' astonish'd savage with a roar replies:
 O heav'ns! O faith of ancient prophecies!
 This, Telemus Eurymedes foretold, 595
 (The mighty seer who on these hills grew old;
 Skill'd the dark fates of mortals to declare,
 And learn'd in all wing'd omens of the air)
 Long since he menac'd, such was fate's command;
 And nam'd Ulysses as the destin'd hand. 600
 I deem'd some godlike giant to behold,
 Or lofty hero, haughty, brave, and bold;
 Not this weak pigmy-wretch, of mean design,
 Who not by strength subdu'd me, but by wine.
 But come, accept our gifts, and join to pray 605
 Great Neptune's blessing on the wat'ry way:
 For his I am, and I the lineage own:
 Th' immortal father no less boasts the son.
 His pow'r can heal me, and relight my eye;
 And only his, of all the gods on high. 610

Oh! could this arm (I thus aloud rejoin'd)
 From that vast bulk dislodge thy bloody mind,

And send thee howling to the realms of night!
 As sure, as Neptune cannot give thee sight.

Thus I: while raging he repeats his cries, 615
 With hands uplifted to the starry skies:
 Hear me, O Neptune! thou whose arms are hurl'd
 From shore to shore, and gird the solid world.
 If thine I am, nor thou my birth disown,
 And if th' unhappy Cyclop be thy son; 620
 Let not Ulysses breathe his native air,
 Laertes' son, of Ithaca the fair.
 If to review his country be his fate,
 Be it through toils and suff'rings, long and late;
 His lost companions let him first deplore; 625
 Some vessel, not his own, transport him o'er;
 And when at home from foreign suff'rings freed,
 More near and deep, domestic woes succeed!

With imprecations thus he fill'd the air, 629
 And angry Neptune heard th' unrighteous pray'r.
 A larger rock then heaving from the plain,
 He whirl'd it round: it sung across the main;
 It fell, and brush'd the stern: the billows roar,
 Shaken at the weight, and reflux beat the shore.
 With all our force we kept aloof to sea, 635
 And gain'd the island where our vessels lay.

Our sight the whole collected navy cheer'd,
 Who, waiting long, by turns had hop'd and fear'd.
 There disembarking on the green sea-side,
 We land our cattle, and the spoil divide: 640
 Of these due shares to ev'ry sailor fall;
 The master ram was voted mine by all:
 And him (the guardian of Ulysses' fate)
 With pious mind to heav'n I consecrate.
 But the great god, whose thunder rends the skies,
 Averse, beholds the smoking sacrifice; 646
 And sees me wand'ring still from coast to coast,
 And all my vessels, all my people, lost!

While thoughtless we indulge the genial rite,
 As plenteous cates and flowing bowls invite; 650
 Till ev'ning Phœbus roll'd away the light:
 Stretch'd on the shore in careless ease we rest,
 Till ruddy morning purpled o'er the east.
 Then from their anchors all our ships unbind,
 And mount the decks, and call the willing wind.
 Now rang'd in order on our banks, we sweep 656
 With hasty strokes the hoarse-resounding deep;
 Blind to the future, pensive with our fears,
 Glad for the living, for the dead in tears.

SELECT NOTES

TO

BOOK IX.

V. 3. *How sweet the products of a peaceful reign, &c.*] This passage has given great joy to the critics, as it has afforded them the ill-natured pleasure of railing, and the satisfaction of believing they have found a fault in a good writer. It is fitter, say they, for the mouth of Epicurus than for the sage Ulysses, to extol the pleasures of feasting and drinking in this manner: he whom the poet proposes as the standard of human wisdom, says Rapin, suffers himself to be made drunk by the Phæacians. But it may rather be imagined, that the critic was not very sober when he made the reflection; for there is not the least appearance of a reason for that imputation. Plato, indeed, in his third book de Repub. writes, that what Ulysses here speaks is no very proper example of temperance; but every body knows that Plato, with respect to Homer, wrote with great partiality. Athenæus in his twelfth book gives us the following interpretation: Ulysses accommodates his discourse to the present occasion; he in appearance approves of the voluptuous lives of the Phæacians, and having heard Alcinous before say, that feasting and singing, &c. was their supreme delight, he by a seasonable flattery seems to comply with their inclinations; it being the most proper method to attain his desires of being conveyed to his own country. He compares Ulysses to the polypus, which is fabled to assume the colour of every rock to which he approaches: thus Sophocles,

Νοῦν πρὸς ἀνδρὶ σῶμα Πυλῶπι, ὅπως
Πίτρη τραπέσθαι γῆσι φεσσημαῖον.

That is, "In your accesses to mankind observe the polypus, and adapt yourself to the humour of the person to whom you apply." Eustathius observes that this passage has been condemned, but he defends it after the very same way with Athenæus.

It is not impossible but that there may be some compliance with the nature and manners of the Phæacians, especially because Ulysses is always described as an artful man, not without some mixture of dissimulation: but it is no difficult matter to take the passage literally, and to give it an irreproachable sense. Ulysses had gone through innumerable calamities, he had lived to see a great part of Europe and Asia laid desolate by a bloody war; and after so many troubles, he arrives among a nation that was unacquainted with all the miseries of war, where all the people were happy, and passed their lives with ease and pleasures: this calm life fills him with admiration, and he artfully praises what he found praise-worthy in it; namely, the entertainments and music, and passes over the gallantries of the people, as Dacier observes, without any mention. Maximus Tyrius fully vindicates Homer. It is my opinion, says that author, that the poet, by representing these guests in the midst of their entertainments, delighted with the song and music, intended to recommend a more noble pleasure than eating and drinking, such a pleasure as a wise man may imitate, by approving the better part, and rejecting the worse, and choosing to please the ear rather than the belly.

12 Dissert.

If we understand the passage otherwise, the meaning may be this: I am persuaded, says Ulysses, that the most agreeable end which a king can propose, is to see a whole nation in universal joy, when music and feasting are in every house, when plenty is on every table, and wines to entertain every guest: this to me appears a state of the greatest felicity.

In this sense Ulysses pays Alcinous a very agreeable compliment; as it is certainly the most glorious aim of a king to make his subjects happy, and diffuse an universal joy through his dominions: he must be a rigid censor indeed who blames such pleasures as these, which have nothing contrary in them to virtue and strict morality; especially as they here bear a beautiful opposition to all the horrors which Ulysses had seen in the wars of Troy, and shew Phæacia as happy as Troy was miserable. I will only add, that this agrees with the oriental way of speaking; and in

the poetical parts of the Scriptures, the voice of melody, feasting, and dancing, are used to express the happiness of a nation.

V. 19. *Behold Ulysses!*] The poet begins with declaring the name of Ulysses: the Phæacians had already been acquainted with it by the song of Demodocus, and therefore it could not fail of raising the utmost attention and curiosity (as Eustathius observes) of the whole assembly, to hear the story of so great a hero. Perhaps it may be thought that Ulysses is ostentatious, and speaks of himself too favourably; but the necessity of it will appear, if we consider that Ulysses had nothing but his personal qualifications to engage the Phæacians in his favour. It was therefore requisite to make those qualifications known, and this was not possible to be done but by his own relation, he being a stranger among strangers. Besides, he speaks before a vain-glorious people, who thought even boasting no fault.

V. 21. *Ithaca the fair,*
Where high Neritus, &c.]

Eustathius gives various interpretations of this position of Ithaca; some understand it to signify that it lies low; others explain it to signify that it is of low position, but high with respect to the neighbouring islands; others take *πανπερίαν* (excellentissima) in another sense, to imply the excellence of the country, which, though it lies low, is productive of brave inhabitants, for Homer immediately adds *αγαθή κυροῖροφ*. Strabo gives a different exposition; Ithaca is *χθαμαλή*, as it lies near to the continent, and *πανπερίατη*, as it is the utmost of all the islands towards the north, *πρὸς ἡλίον*, for thus *πρὸς ζῶφον* is to be understood. So that Ithaca, adds he, is not of a low situation, but as it lies opposed to the continent, nor the most lofty (*υψηλοτάτη*) but the most extreme of the northern islands; for so *πανπερίατη* signifies. Dacier differs from Strabo in the explication of *πρὸς ἡῶ τ' ἡλίον τε*, which he believes to mean the south; she applies the words to the east, or south-east, and appeals to the maps which so describe it. It is the most northern of the islands, and joins to the continent of Epirus; it has Dulichium on the east, and on the south Samos and Zacynthus.

V. 41. *to the Cicons' shore.*] Here is the natural and true beginning of the Odyssey, which comprehends all the sufferings of Ulysses, and these sufferings take their date immediately after his leaving the shores of Troy; from that moment he endeavours to return to his own country, and all the difficulties he meets with in returning, enter into the subject of the poem. But it may then be asked, if the Odyssey does not take up the space of ten years, since Ulysses wastes so many in his return: and is not this contrary to the nature of epic poetry, which is agreed must not at the longest exceed the duration of one year, or rather campaign? The answer is, the poet lets all the time pass which exceeds the bounds of epic action, before he opens the poem; thus Ulysses spends some time before he arrives at the island of Circe, with her he continues one year, and seven with Calypso; he begins artificially at the conclusion of the action, and finds an opportunity to repeat the most considerable and necessary incidents which preceded the opening of the Odyssey; by this method he reduces the duration of it into less compass than the space of two months. This conduct is absolutely necessary, for from the time that the poet introduces his hero upon the stage, he ought to continue his action to the very end of it, that he may never afterwards appear idle or out of motion: this is verified in Ulysses: from the moment he leaves the island of Ogygia to the death of the suitors, he is never out of view, never idle; he is always either in action, or preparing for it, till he is re-established in his dominions. If the poet had followed the natural order of the action, he, like Lucan, would not have wrote an epic poem, but a history in verse.

V. 44. *And sack'd the city. . . .*] The poet assigns no reason why Ulysses destroys this city of the Ciconians, but we may learn from the Iliad that they were auxiliaries of Troy, book the second:

‘With great Euphemus the Ciconians move,
Sprung from Træzenian Cœus, lov'd of Jove.’

And therefore Ulysses assaults them as enemies. EUSTATHIUS.

V. 69. *Six brave companions from each ship we lost.*] This is

one of the passages which fell under the censure of Zoilus; it is very improbable, says that critic, that each vessel should lose six men exactly; this seems a too equal distribution to be true, considering the chance of battle. But it has been answered, that Ulysses had twelve vessels, and that in this engagement he lost seventy-two soldiers; so that the meaning is, that taking the total of his loss, and dividing it equally through the whole fleet, he found it amounted exactly to six men in every vessel. This will appear to be a true solution, if we remember that there was a necessity to supply the loss of any one ship out of the others that had suffered less: so that though one vessel lost more than the rest, yet being recruited equally from the rest of the fleet, there would be exactly six men wanting in every vessel. EUSTATHIUS.

V. 74. *And thrice we call'd on each unhappy shade.*] This passage preserves a piece of antiquity: it was the custom of the Grecians, when their friends died upon foreign shores, to use this ceremony of recalling their souls, though they obtained not their bodies, believing by this method that they transported them to their own country: Pindar mentions the same practice,

Κελεύει γὰρ εἶν
Ψυχὰν κομίζαι Φριξέου, &c.

That is, 'Phrixus commands thee to call his soul into his own country.' Thus the Athenians, when they lost any men at sea, went to the shores, and calling thrice on their manes, raised a cenotaph or empty monument to their memories; by performing which solemnity, they invited the shades of the departed to return, and performed all rites as if the bodies of the dead had really been buried by them in their sepulchres. EUSTATHIUS.

The Romans, as well as the Greeks, followed the same custom: thus Virgil:

' Et magnâ manes ter voce vocavi.'

The occasion of this practice arose from the opinion, that the souls of the departed were not admitted into the state of the happy, without the performance of the sepulchral solemnities.

V. 93. *The tenth we touch'd*

The land of Lotos]

This passage has given occasion for much controversy ; for since the Lotophagi in reality are distant from the Malean Cape twenty-two thousand five hundred stades, Ulysses must sail above two thousand every day, if in nine days he sailed to the Lotophagi. This objection would be unanswerable, if we place that nation in the Atlantic ocean ; but Dacier observes from Strabo, that Polybius examined this point, and thus gives us the result of it. This great historian maintains, that Homer has not placed the Lotophagi in the Atlantic ocean, as he does the islands of Circe and Calypso, because it was improbable that in the compass of ten days the most favourable winds could have carried Ulysses from the Malean Cape into that ocean ; it therefore follows that the poet has given us the true situation of this nation, conformable to geography, and placed it as it really lies, in the Mediterranean ; now in ten days a good wind will carry a vessel from Malea into the Mediterranean, as Homer relates.

This is an instance that Homer sometimes follows truth without fiction, at other times disguises it. But I confess I think Homer's poetry would have been as beautiful if he had described all his islands in their true positions : his inconstancy in this point may seem to introduce confusion and ambiguity, when the truth would have been more clear, and as beautiful in his poetry.

Nothing can better shew the great deference which former ages paid Homer, than these defences of the learned ancients ; they continually ascribe his deviations from truth (as in the instance before us) to design, not to ignorance ; to his art as a poet, and not to want of skill as a geographer. In a writer of less fame, such relations might be thought errors, but in Homer they are either understood to be no errors, or if errors, they are vindicated by the greatest names of antiquity.

Eustathius adds, that the ancients disagree about this island : some place it about Cyrene, from Maurusia of the African Moors : it is also named Meninx, and lies upon the African coast, near the lesser Syrte. It is about three hundred and fifty stades in

length, and somewhat less in breadth: it is also named Loto-phagitis from Lotos.

V. 100. *An herald one.*] The reason why the poet mentions the herald in particular, is because his office was sacred; and by the common law of nations his person inviolable: Ulysses therefore joins an herald in this commission, for the greater security of those whom he sends to search the country. EUSTATHIUS.

V. 106. *Lotos.*] Eustathius assures us, that there are various kinds of it. It has been a question whether it is an herb, a root, or a tree: he is of opinion, that Homer speaks of it as an herb; for he calls it *αἰθρον εἶδαρ*, and that the word *ἐπὶ τὸ βοῦν* is in its proper sense applied to the grazing of beasts, and therefore he judges it not to be a tree or root. He adds, there is an Egyptian lotos, which, as Herodotus affirms, grows in great abundance along the Nile in the time of its inundations; it resembles (says that historian in his *Euterpe*) a lily; the Egyptians dry it in the sun, then take the pulp out of it, which grows like the head of a poppy, and bake it as bread; this kind of it agrees likewise with the *Αἰθρον εἶδαρ* of Homer. Athenæus writes of the Lybian lotos in the fourteenth book of his *Deipnosophist*; he quotes the words of Polybius in the twelfth book of his history, now not extant; that historian speaks of it as an eye-witness, having examined the nature of it. ‘The lotos is a tree of no great height, rough and thorny: it bears a green leaf, somewhat thicker and broader than that of the bramble or briar; its fruit at first is like the ripe berries of the myrtle, both in size and colour, but when it ripens it turns to purple; it is then about the bigness of an olive; it is round, and contains a very small kernel; when it is ripe they gather it, and bruising it among bread-corn, they put it up into a vessel, and keep it as food for their slaves; they dress it after the same manner for their other domestics, but first take out the kernel from it: it has the taste of a fig, or dates, but is of a far better smell: they likewise make a wine of it, by steeping and bruising it in water; it has a very agreeable taste, like wine tempered with honey. They drink it without mixing it with water, but it will not keep above ten days, they therefore make it only in small quantities for immediate use.’ Perhaps it was this last kind

of lotos, which the companions of Ulysses tasted; and if it was prepared, it gives a reason why they were overcome with it; for being a wine, it had the power of intoxication.

V. 118. *The charm tasted, had return'd no more.*] It must be confessed, that the effects of this lotos are extraordinary, and seem fabulous; how then shall we reconcile the relation to credibility? the foundation of it might perhaps be no more than this: the companions of Ulysses might be willing to settle amongst these Lotophagi, being won by the pleasure of the place, and tired with a life of danger and the perils of seas. Or perhaps it is only an allegory, to teach us that those who indulge themselves in pleasures, are with difficulty withdrawn from them, and want an Ulysses to lead them by a kind of violence into the paths of glory.

V. 119. *The land of Cyclops first.*] Homer here confines himself to the true geography of Sicily: for, in reality, a ship may easily sail in one day from the land of the Lotophagi to Sicily: these Cyclops inhabited the western part of that island, about Drepane and Lilybæum. Bochart shews us, that they derive their name from the place of their habitation; for the Phæacians call them Chek-lub, by contraction for Chek-lalub; that is, the gulf of Lilybæum, or the men who dwell about the Lilybæan gulf. The Greeks (who understood not the Phæacian language) formed the word Cyclop, from Chek-lub, from the affinity of sound; which word in the Greek language, signifying a circular eye, might give occasion to fable that they had but one large round eye in the middle of their foreheads. DACIER.

Eustathius tells us, that the eye of the Cyclops is an allegory, to represent that in anger, or any other violent passion, men see but one single object, as that passion directs, or see but with one eye: *εἰς ὅ τι, καὶ μόνον ὁρᾷ*: and that passion transforms us into a kind of savages, and makes us brutal and sanguinary, like this Polypheme; and he that by reason extinguishes such a passion, may like Ulysses be said to put out that eye that made him see but one single object.

I have already given another reason of this fiction; namely, their wearing a head-piece, or martial vizor, that had but one sight through it. The vulgar form their judgments from appear-

ances; and a mariner, who passed these coasts at a distance, observing the resemblance of a broad eye in the forehead of one of these Cyclops, might relate it accordingly, and impose it as a truth upon the credulity of the ignorant: it is notorious that things equally monstrous have found belief in all ages.

But it may be asked, if there were any such persons who bore the name of Cyclops? No less an historian than Thucydides informs us, that Sicily was at first possessed and inhabited by giants, by the Læstrigons and Cyclops, a barbarous and inhuman people: but he adds, that these savages dwelt only in one part of that island.

Cedrenus gives us an exact description of the Cyclops: Επειθεν Οδυσσευς εμπίπτει Κυκλωπι εν Σικελια οκ ενι οφθαλμω, &c. 'Ulysses fell among the Cyclops in Sicily; a people not one-eyed, according to the mythologists, but men like other men, only of a more gigantic stature, and of a barbarous and savage temper.' From this description, we may see what Homer writes as a poet, and what as an historian; he paints these people in general agreeably to their persons, only disguises some features, to give an ornament to his relation, and to introduce the marvellous, which demands a place chiefly in epic poetry.

What Homer speaks of the fertility of Sicily, is agreeable to history: it was called anciently, 'Romani Imperii Horreum.' Pliny, lib. x. cap. 10. writes, that the Leontine plains bear for every grain of corn an hundred. Diodorus Siculus relates in his History what Homer speaks in poetry, that the fields of Leontium yield wheat without the culture of the husbandman: he was an eye-witness, being a native of the island. From hence in general it may be observed, that wherever we can trace Homer, we find, if not historic truth, yet the resemblance of it; that is, as plain truth as can be related without converting his poem into an history.

V. 134, *An isle, whose hills, &c.*] This little isle is now called Ægusa, which signifies the isle of goats. Cluverius describes it after the manner of Homer, 'Prata mollia, et irrigua, solum fertile, portum commodum, fontes limpidos.' It is not certain whether the poet gives any name to it: perhaps it had not received

any in those ages, it being without inhabitants; though some take *λαχεια* for a proper name, as is observed by Eustathius.

V. 144. *Bleating goat.*] It is exactly thus in the original, verse 124, *μηκαδας* ‘balantes;’ which Pollux, lib. v. observes not to be the proper term for the voice of goats, which is *φρυγμας*.

V. 178. *The woodland nymphs.*] This passage is not without obscurity, and it is not easy to understand what is meant by ‘the daughters of Jupiter.’ Eustathius tells us, the poet speaks allegorically, and that he means to specify the plants and herbs of the field. Jupiter denotes the air, not only in Homer, but in the Latin poets. Thus Virgil :

‘Tum pater omnipotens fecundis imbribus Æther
Conjugis in gremium lætæ descendit’

and consequently the herbs and plants, being nourished by the mild air and fruitful rains, may be said to be the daughters of Jupiter, or offspring of the skies; and these goats and beasts of the field, being fed by these plants and herbs, may be said to be awakened by the daughters of Jupiter, that is, they awake to feed upon the herbage early in the morning: *Κῆραι Διός, αλληγορικῶς αἱ τῶν φυτῶν αὐξητικαὶ δυνάμεις αἱ ὁ ζεὺς ποιεῖ*. Thus Homer makes deities of the vegetative faculties and virtues of the field. I fear such boldnesses would not be allowed in modern poetry.

It must be confessed that this interpretation is very refined: but I am sure it will be a more natural explication to take these for the real mountain nymphs (*Oreades*) as they are in many places of the *Odyssey*; the very expression is found in the sixth book,

. *Νυμφαὶ κῆραι Διός*

and there signifies the nymphs attending upon Diana in her sports; and immediately after Ulysses, being awakened by a sudden noise, mistakes Nausicaa and her damsels for nymphs of the mountains or floods. This conjecture will not be without probability, if we remember that these nymphs were huntresses, as is evident from their relation to Diana. Why then may not

this other expression be meant of the nymphs that are fabled to inhabit the mountains?

V. 221. *A form enormous! far unlike the race of human birth.*] Geropius Becanus, an Antwerpian, has wrote a large discourse to prove, that there never were any such men as giants; contrary to the testimony both of profane and sacred history: thus Moses speaks of the Rephaims of Asteroth, the Zamzummims of Ham, the Emims of Moab, and Anakims of Hebron. See Deut. ii. ver. 20. 'That also was called a land of giants, it was a great people, and tall as the Zamzummims.' Thus Goliath must be allowed to be a giant, for he was six cubits and a span, that is, nine feet and a span in height; his coat of mail weighed five thousand shekels of brass, about one hundred and fifty pounds (but I confess others understand the lesser shekel): the head of his spear alone weighed six hundred shekels of iron, that is, about eighteen or nineteen pounds. We find the like relations in profane history: Plutarch in his life of Theseus says, that age was productive of men of prodigious stature, giants. Thus Diodorus Siculus; 'Ægyptii scribunt, Isidiis ætate, fuisse vasto corpore homines, quos Græci dixere gigantes.' Herodotus affirms that the body of Orestes was dug up, and appeared to be seven cubits long; but Aulus Gellius believes this to be an error. Josephus writes, l. xviii. c. 6. that Vitellius sent a Jew named Eleazar, seven cubits in height, as a present from Artabanus king of the Parthians, to Tiberius Cæsar; this man was ten feet and a half high. Pliny vii. 16. speaks of a man that was nine feet nine inches high; and in another place, vi. 30. 'Sybortas, gentem Æthiopum Nomadum, octona cubita longitudine excedere.'

Thus it is evident, that there have been men of very extraordinary stature in former ages. Though perhaps such instances were not frequent in any age or any nation. So that Homer only amplifies, not invents; and as there really was a people called Cyclopeans, so they might be men of great stature, or giants.

It may seem strange that in all ancient stories the first planters of most nations are recorded to be giants: I scarce persuade myself but such accounts are generally fabulous; and hope to be pardoned for a conjecture which may give a seeming reason how

such stories came to prevail. The Greeks were a people of very great antiquity; they made many expeditions, as appears from Jason, &c. and sent out frequent colonies: now the head of every colony was called *Ἀναξ*, and these adventurers being persons of great figure in story, were recorded as men of war, of might and renown, through the old world: it is therefore not impossible but the Hebrews might form their word *Anac* from the Greek *Ἀναξ*, and use it to denote persons of uncommon might and abilities. These they called *Anac*, and sons of *Anac*; and afterwards in a less proper sense used it to signify men of uncommon stature, or giants. So that in this sense, all nations may be said to be originally peopled by a son of *Anac*, or a giant. But this is submitted as a conjecture to the reader's judgment.

V. 229. *Precious wine, the gift of Maron.*] Such digressions as these are frequent in Homer, but I am far from thinking them always beauties: it is true, they give variety to poetry; but whether that be an equivalent for calling off the attention of the reader from the more important action, and diverting it with small incidents, is what I much question. It is not indeed impossible but this *Maron* might have been the friend of Homer, and this praise of him will then be a monument of his grateful disposition; and in this view a beauty. It must be confessed that *Ulysses* makes use of this wine to a very good effect, viz. to bring about the destruction of *Polypheme*, and his own deliverance; and therefore it was necessary to set it off very particularly, but this might have been done in fewer lines. As it now stands it is a little episode; our expectations are raised to learn the event of so uncommon an adventure, when all of a sudden Homer breaks the story, and gives us a history of *Maron*. But I distrust my judgment much rather than Homer's.

V. 243. *Scarce twenty measures from the living stream
To cool one cup suffic'd]*

There is no wine of so strong a body as to bear such a disproportionate quantity; but Homer amplifies the strength of it to prepare the reader for its surprising effects immediately upon *Polypheme*.

V. 344. *And dash'd like dogs*

The pavement swims, &c.]

There is a great beauty in the versification in the original:

Συν δὲ δυν μαρψας, ὥστε σκυλακας ποτι γαῖη
Κοπὶ' ἐκ δ' εἰλεφαλῶ χαμαδὶς ῥεε, δευε δὲ γαῖαν.

Dionysius Halicarn. takes notice of it, in his Dissertation upon placing words: when the companions of Ulysses, says that author, are dashed against the rock, to express the horror of the action, Homer dwells upon the most inharmonious harsh letters and syllables: he no where uses any softness, or any run of verses to please the ear. Scaliger injudiciously condemns this description. ‘Homer,’ says he, ‘makes use of the most offensive and loathsome expressions, more fit for a butcher’s shambles than the majesty of heroic poetry.’ Macrobius, lib. v. cap. 13. of his Saturnalia, commends these lines of Homer, and even prefers them before the same description in Virgil; his words are, ‘Narrationem facti nudam Maro posuit, Homerus παθος miscuit, et dolore narrandi invidiam crudelitatis æquavit.’ And indeed he must be a strange critic that expects soft verses upon a horrible occasion; whereas the verses ought, if possible, to represent the thought they are intended to convey; and every person’s ear will inform him that Homer has not in this passage executed this rule unsuccessfully.

V. 394. *The lots were cast*] Ulysses bids his friends to cast lots; this is done to shew that he would not voluntarily expose them to so imminent danger. If he had made the choice himself, they whom he had chosen might have thought he had given them up to destruction, and they whom he had rejected might have judged it a stain upon them as a want of merit, and so have complained of injustice; but by this method he avoids these inconveniencies.

V. 399. *Or so some god design’d.]* Ulysses ascribes it to the influence of the gods that Polypheme drives the whole flock into his den, and does not separate the females from the males, as he had before done; for by this accident Ulysses makes his escape, as appears from the following part of the story. Homer here uses

the word *οισσαμενος*, to shew the suspicion which Polypheme might entertain that Ulysses had other companions abroad who might plunder his flocks; and this gives another reason why he drove them all into his cave, namely, for the greater security.

V. 432. *Noman is my name.*] I will not trouble the reader with a long account of *ετις*; to be found in Eustathius, who seems delighted with this piece of pleasantry; nor with what Dacier observes, who declares she approves of it extremely, and calls it a very happy imagination. If it were modesty in me to dissent from Homer, and two commentators, I would own my opinion of it, and acknowledge the whole to be nothing but a collusion of words, and fitter to have place in a farce or comedy, than in epic poetry. Lucian has thus used it, and applied it to raise laughter in one of his facetious dialogues. The whole wit or jest lies in the ambiguity of *ετις*, which Ulysses imposes upon Polypheme as his own name, which in reality signifies, ‘No man.’ I doubt not but Homer was well pleased with it, for afterwards he plays upon the word, and calls Ulysses *ετιδαος* *ετις*. But the faults of Homer have a kind of veneration, perhaps like old age, from their antiquity.

V. 458. *Who ply the whimble.*] This and the following comparison are drawn from low life, but ennobled with a dignity of expression. Instead of *ελοις*, Aristarchus reads *εχολις*, as Eustathius informs us. The similitudes are natural and lively; we are made spectators of what they represent. Sophocles has imitated this, in the tragedy where Oedipus tears out his own eyes; and Euripides has transferred this whole adventure into his Cyclops with very little alteration, and in particular the former comparison. But to instance all that Euripides has imitated, would be to transcribe a great part of that tragedy. In short, this episode in general is very noble; but if the interlude about *Ουτις* be at all allowable in so grave and majestic a poem, it is only allowable because it is here related before a light and injudicious assembly; I mean the Phæacians, to whom any thing more great or serious would have been less pleasing; so that the poet writes to his audience. I wonder this has never been offered in defence of this low entertainment.

V. 495. *The stone removing from the gate.*] This conduct of Polypheme may seem very absurd, and it looks to be improbable that he should not call the other giants to assist him, in the detection of the persons who had taken his sight from him; especially when it was now day-light, and they at hand. Eustathius was aware of the objection, and imputes it to his folly and dullness. Tully, 5 Tuscul. gives the same character of Polypheme; and because it vindicates Homer for introducing a speech of Polypheme to his ram, I will beg leave to transcribe it. 'Tiresiam, quem sapientem fingunt poetæ, nunquam inducunt deplorantem Cæcitatem suam; at verò Polyphemum Homerus, cum immanem ferumque finxisset, cum ancte etiam colloquentem facit, ejusque laudare fortunas, quod quâ vellet, ingredi posset, et quæ vellet attingere: recte hic equidem; nihil enim erat ipse Cyclops quam aries ille prudentior.' This is a full defence of Homer: but Tully has mistaken the words of Polypheme to the ram, for there is no resemblance to 'ejus laudare fortunas, quod quâ vellet ingredi posset,' &c. I suppose Tully quoted by memory.

V. 511. *One ram remain'd, the leader of the flock.*] This passage has been misunderstood, to imply that Ulysses took more care of himself than of his companions, in choosing the largest ram for his own convenience; an imputation unworthy of the character of an hero. But there is no ground for it; he takes more care of his friends than of his own person, for he allots them three sheep, and lets them escape before him. Besides, this conduct was necessary; for all his friends were bound, and by choosing this ram, he keeps himself at liberty to unbind the rest after their escape. Neither was there any other method practicable; for he, being the last, there was no person to bind him. EUSTATHIUS.

The care Ulysses takes of his companions agrees with the character of Horace:

'Dum sibi, dum sociis reditum parat, aspera multa
Pertulit'

But it may seem improbable that a ram should be able to carry so

great a burden as Ulysses; the generation of sheep, as well as men, may appear to have decreased since the days of Ulysses. Homer himself seems to have guarded against this objection; he describes these sheep as *ευτρεφεες, καλοι, μεγαλοι*; the ram is spoken of as *μακρα βιβας* (an expression applied to Ajax, as Eustathius observes, in the Iliad). History informs us of sheep of a very large size in other countries, and a poet is at liberty to choose the largest, if by that method he gives his story a greater appearance of probability.

V. 569. *It almost brush'd the helm, &c.*] The ancients, remarks Eustathius, placed an obelisk and asterism before this verse; the former, to note that they thought it misplaced; the latter, to shew that they looked upon it as a beauty. Apparently it is not agreeable to the description; for how is it possible that this huge rock falling *before* the vessel should endanger the rudder, which is in the stern? Can a ship sail with the stern foremost? Some ancient critics, to take away the contradiction, have asserted that Ulysses turned his ship to speak to Polypheme; but this is absurd, for why could not Ulysses speak from the stern as well as from the prow? it therefore seems that the verse ought to be entirely omitted, as undoubtedly it may without any chasm in the author. We find it inserted a little lower, and there it corresponds with the description, and stands with propriety.

But if we suppose that the ship of Ulysses lay at such a distance from the cave of Polypheme, as to make it necessary to bring it nearer, to be heard distinctly; then indeed we may solve the difficulty, and let the verse stand: for if we suppose Ulysses approaching towards Polypheme, then the rock may be said to be thrown before the vessel, that is, beyond it, and endanger the rudder, and this bears some appearance of probability.

V. 595. *This, Telemus Eurymedes foretold.*] This incident sufficiently shews the use of that dissimulation which enters into the character of Ulysses: if he had discovered his name, the Cyclops had destroyed him as his most dangerous enemy—Plutarch, in his discourse upon garrulity, commends the fidelity of the companions of Ulysses, who, when they were dragged by this giant and dashed against the rock, confessed not a word concern-

ing their lord, and scorned to purchase their lives at the expence of their honesty. Ulysses himself, adds he, was the most eloquent and silent of men; he knew that a word spoken never wrought so much good, as a word concealed: men teach us to speak, but the gods teach us silence; for silence is the first thing that is taught us at our initiation into sacred mysteries; and we find these companions had profited under so great a master in silence as Ulysses.

V. 603. *Not this weak pigmy-wretch*] This is spoken in compliance with the character of a giant; the Phæacians wondered at the manly stature of Ulysses; Polypheme speaks of him as a dwarf; his rage undoubtedly made him treat him with so much contempt. Nothing in nature can be better imagined than this story of the Cyclops, if we consider the assembly before which it was spoken; I mean the Phæacians, who had been driven from their habitation by the Cyclopeans, as appears from the sixth of the Odyssey, and compelled to make a new settlement in their present country: Ulysses gratifies them by shewing what revenge he took upon one of their ancient enemies, and they could not decently refuse assistance to a person who had punished those who had insulted their forefathers.

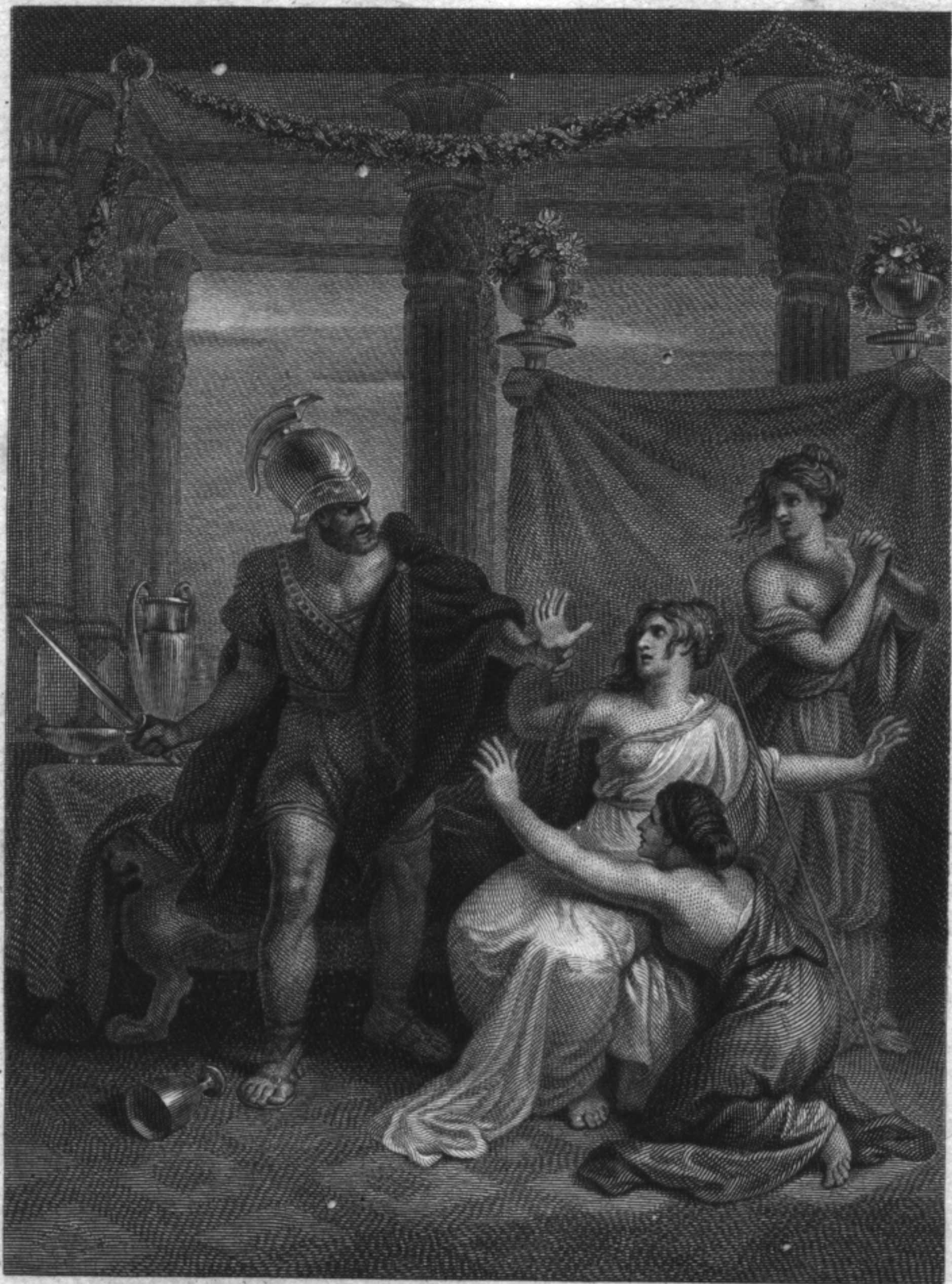
V. 617. *The prayer of the Cyclops.*] This is a masterpiece of art in Ulysses; he shews Neptune to be his enemy, which might deter the Phæacians from assisting in his transportation, yet brings this very circumstance as an argument to induce them to it. 'O Neptune,' says the Cyclops, 'destroy Ulysses, or if he be fated to return, may it be in a vessel not of his own!' Here he plainly tells the Phæacians that the prayer of the Cyclops was almost accomplished, for his own ships were destroyed by Neptune, and now he was ready to sail in a foreign vessel; by which the whole prayer would be completed. By this he persuades them, that they were the people ordained by the fates to land him in his own country.

THE
TENTH BOOK
OF THE
ODYSSEY.

THE ARGUMENT.

ADVENTURES WITH ÆOLUS, THE LÆSTRIGONS, AND CIRCE.

ULYSSES arrives at the island of Æolus, who gives him prosperous winds, and incloses the adverse ones in a bag, which his companions untying, they are driven back again, and rejected. Then they sail to the Læstrigons, where they lose eleven ships, and, with one only remaining, proceed to the island of Circe. Eurylochus is sent first with some companions, all which, except Eurylochus, are transformed into swine. Ulysses then undertakes the adventure, and by the help of Mercury, who gives him the herb moly, overcomes the enchantress, and procures the restoration of his men. After a year's stay with her, he prepares at her instigation for his voyage to the infernal shades.



Painted by R. Smirke R.A.

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BOOK X.

At length we reach'd Æolia's sea-girt shore,
Where great Hippotades the sceptre bore;
A floating isle! High-raís'd by toil divine,
Strong walls of brass the rocky coast confine.
Six blooming youths, in private grandeur bred, 5
And six fair daughters, grac'd the royal bed:
These sons their sisters wed, and all remain
Their parents' pride, and pleasure of their reign.
All day they feast, all day the bowls fly round,
And joy and music through the isle resound: 10
At night each pair on splendid carpets lay,
And crown'd with love the pleasures of the day.

This happy port affords our wand'ring fleet
A month's reception, and a safe retreat.
Full oft the monarch urg'd me to relate 15
The fall of Ilion, and the Grecian fate;
Full oft I told: at length for parting mov'd;
The king with mighty gifts my suit approv'd.
The adverse winds in leathern bags he brac'd,

Compress'd their force, and lock'd each struggling
blast: 20

For him the mighty sire of gods assign'd
The tempest's lord, the tyrant of the wind;
His word alone the list'ning storms obey,
To smooth the deep, or swell the foamy sea.
These in my hollow ship the monarch hung, 25
Securely fetter'd by a silver thong;
But Zephyrus exempt, with friendly gales
He charg'd to fill, and guide the swelling sails:
Rare gift! but oh, what gift to fools avails!

Nine prosp'rous days we ply'd the lab'ring oar;
The tenth presents our welcome native shore: 31
The hills display the beacon's friendly light,
And rising mountains gain upon our sight.
Then first my eyes, by watchful toils oppress'd,
Comply'd to take the balmy gifts of rest; 35
Then first my hands did from the rudder part,
(So much the love of home possess'd my heart)
When lo! on board a fond debate arose;
What rare device those vessels might enclose?
What sum, what prize from Æolus I brought? 40
Whilst to his neighbour each express'd his thought:

Say, whence, ye gods, contending nations strive
Who most shall please, who most our hero give?

Long have his coffers groan'd with Trojan spoils;
 Whilst we, the wretched partners of his toils, 45
 Reproach'd by want, our fruitless labours mourn,
 And only rich in barren fame return.

Now Æolus, ye see, augments his store;
 But come, my friends, these mystic gifts explore.
 They said; and (oh curs'd fate!) the thongs un-
 bound! 50

The gushing tempest sweeps the ocean round;
 Snatch'd in the whirl, the hurry'd navy flew,
 The ocean widen'd, and the shores withdrew.
 Rous'd from my fatal sleep, I long debate
 If still to live, or desp'rate plunge to fate: 55
 Thus doubting, prostrate on the deck I lay,
 Till all the coward thoughts of death gave way.

Meanwhile our vessels plough the liquid plain,
 And soon the known Æolian coast regain,
 Our groans the rocks remurmur'd to the main. 60
 We leap'd on shore, and with a scanty feast
 Our thirst and hunger hastily repress'd;
 That done, two chosen heralds straight attend
 Our second progress to my royal friend;
 And him amidst his jovial sons we found; 65
 The banquet steaming, and the goblets crown'd:

There humbly stopp'd with conscious shame and
awe,

Nor nearer than the gate presum'd to draw.

But soon his sons their well-known guest descry'd,

And starting from their couches loudly cry'd: 70

Ulysses here! what dæmon couldst thou meet

To thwart thy passage and repel thy fleet?

Wast thou not furnish'd by our choicest care

For Greece, for home, and all thy soul held dear?

Thus they; in silence long my fate I mourn'd, 75

At length these words with accent low return'd:

Me, lock'd in sleep, my faithless crew bereft

Of all the blessings of your godlike gift!

But grant, O grant our loss we may retrieve:

A favour you, and you alone can give. 80

Thus I with art to move their pity try'd,

And touch'd the youths; but their stern sire re-

ply'd:

Vile wretch, be gone! this instant I command

Thy fleet accurs'd to leave our hallow'd land.

His baneful suit pollutes these bless'd abodes, 85

Whose fate proclaims him hateful to the gods.

Thus fierce he said: we sighing went our way,

And with desponding hearts put off to sea.

The sailors spent with toils their folly mourn,
 But mourn in vain ; no prospect of return. 90
 Six days and nights a doubtful course we steer,
 The next proud Lamos' stately tow'rs appear,
 And Læstrigonia's gates arise distinct in air.
 The shepherd quitting here at night the plain, 94
 Calls, to succeed his cares, the watchful swain ;
 But he that scorns the chains of sleep to wear,
 And adds the herdsman's to the shepherd's care,
 So near the pastures, and so short the way,
 His double toils may claim a double pay,
 And join the labours of the night and day. 100

Within a long recess a bay there lies,
 Edg'd round with cliffs, high pointing to the skies ;
 The jutting shores that swell on either side
 Contract its mouth, and break the rushing tide.
 Our eager sailors seize the fair retreat, 105
 And bound within the port their crowded fleet :
 For here retir'd the sinking billows sleep,
 And smiling calmness silver'd o'er the deep.
 I only in the bay refus'd to moor, .
 And fix'd, without, my halsers to the shore. 110

From thence we climb'd a point, whose airy brow
 Commands the prospect of the plains below :

No tracks of beasts, or signs of men we found,
 But smoky volumes rolling from the ground.
 Two with our herald thither we command, 115
 With speed to learn what men possess'd the land.
 They went, and kept the wheel's smooth beaten
 road . .

Which to the city drew the mountain wood ;
 When lo ! they met, beside a crystal spring,
 The daughter of Antiphates the king ; 120
 She to Artacia's silver streams came down
 (Artacia's streams alone supply the town) :
 The damsel they approach, and ask'd what race
 The people were ? who monarch of the place ?
 With joy the maid th' unwary strangers heard, 125
 And shew'd them where the royal dome appear'd.
 They went ; but as they ent'ring saw the queen
 Of size enormous, and terrific mien,
 (Not yielding to some bulky mountain's height)
 A sudden horror struck their aching sight. 130
 Swift at her call her husband scour'd away
 To wreak his hunger on the destin'd prey :
 One for his food the raging glutton slew,
 But two rush'd out, and to the navy flew.

Balk'd of his prey, the yelling monster flies
 And fills the city with his hideous cries ;

A ghastly band of giants hear the roar,
 And pouring down the mountains, crowd the shore.
 Fragments they rend from off the craggy brow,
 And dash the ruins on the ships below: 140
 The crackling vessels burst; hoarse groans arise,
 And mingled horrors echo to the skies;
 The men, like fish, they stuck upon the flood,
 And cram'd their filthy throats with human food.
 Whilst thus their fury rages at the bay, 145
 My sword our cables cut, I call'd to weigh;
 And charg'd my men, as they from fate would fly,
 Each nerve to strain, each bending oar to ply.
 The sailors catch the word, their oars they seize,
 And sweep with equal strokes the smoky seas;
 Clear of the rocks th' impatient vessel flies; 151
 Whilst in the port each wretch encumber'd dies.
 With earnest haste my frightened sailors press,
 While kindling transports glow'd at our success;
 But the sad fate that did our friends destroy 155
 Cool'd ev'ry breast, and damp'd the rising joy.

Now dropp'd our anchors in th' Ææan bay,
 Where Circe dwelt, the daughter of the day;
 Her mother Persè, of old Ocean's strain:
 Thus from the sun descended, and the main; 160

(From the same lineage stern *Æætes* came,
 The far-fam'd brother of th' enchantress dame)
 Goddess, and queen, to whom the pow'rs belong
 Of dreadful magic, and commanding song.
 Some god directing, to this peaceful bay 165
 Silent we came, and melancholy lay,
 Spent and o'erwatch'd. Two days and nights
 roll'd on,

And now the third succeeding morning shone.
 I climb'd a cliff with spear and sword in hand,
 Whose ridge o'erlook'd a shady length of land;
 To learn if aught of mortal works appear, 171
 Or cheerful voice of mortal strike the ear?
 From the high point I mark'd, in distant view,
 A stream of curling smoke, ascending blue,
 And spiry tops, the tufted trees above, 175
 Of Circe's palace bosom'd in the grove.

Thither to haste, the region to explore,
 Was first my thought: but speeding back to shore
 I deem'd it best to visit first my crew,
 And send out spies the dubious coast to view. 180
 As down the hill I solitary go,
 Some pow'r divine who pities human woe
 Sent a tall stag, descending from the wood,
 To cool his fervour in the crystal flood;

Luxuriant on the wave-worn bank he lay, 185
 Stretch'd forth, and panting in the sunny ray.
 I launch'd my spear, and with a sudden wound
 Transpierc'd his back, and fix'd him to the ground.
 He falls, and mourns his fate with human cries:
 Through the wide wound the vital spirit flies. 190
 I drew, and casting on the river side
 The bloody spear, his gather'd feet I ty'd
 With twining osiers which the bank supply'd.
 An ell in length the pliant wisp I weav'd,
 And the huge body on my shoulders heav'd: 195
 Then leaning on the spear with both my hands,
 Upbore my load, and press'd the sinking sands
 With weighty steps, till at the ship I threw
 The welcome burden, and bespoke my crew: 199
 Cheer up, my friends! it is not yet our fate
 To glide with ghosts through Pluto's gloomy gate.
 Food in the desert land, behold! is giv'n,
 Live, and enjoy the providence of heav'n.
 The joyful crew survey his mighty size,
 And on the future banquet feast their eyes, 205
 As huge in length extended lay the beast;
 Then wash their hands, and hasten to the feast.
 There, till the setting sun roll'd down the light,
 They sat indulging in the genial rite.

When ev'ning rose, and darkness cover'd o'er 210
 The face of things, we slept along the shore.
 But when the rosy morning warm'd the east,
 My men I summon'd, and these words addrest:

Followers and friends; attend what I propose:
 Ye sad companions of Ulysses' woes! 215
 We know not here what land before us lies,
 Or to what quarter now we turn our eyes,
 Or where the sun shall set, or where shall rise.
 Here let us think (if thinking be not vain)
 If any counsel, any hope remain. 220

Alas! from yonder promontory's brow,
 I view'd the coast, a region flat and low;
 An isle encircled with the boundless flood;
 A length of thickets, and entangled wood.
 Some smoke I saw amid the forest rise, 225
 And all around it only seas and skies!

With broken hearts my sad companions stood,
 Mindful of Cyclops and his human food,
 And horrid Læstrigons, the men of blood.
 Presaging tears apace began to rain; 230
 But tears in mortal miseries are vain.
 In equal parts I straight divide my band,
 And name a chief each party to command

I led the one, and of the other side ,
 Appointed brave Eurylochus the guide. 235

Then in the brazen helm the lots we throw,
 And fortune casts Eurylochus to go:

He march'd, with twice eleven in his train:

Pensive they march, and pensive we remain.

The palace in a woody vale they found, 240

High rais'd of stone; a shaded space around:

Where mountain wolves and brindled lions roam,

(By magic tam'd) familiar to the dome.

With gentle blandishment our men they meet,

And wag their tails, and fawning lick their feet.

As from some feast a man returning late, 246

His faithful dogs all meet him at the gate,

Rejoicing round, some morsel to receive

(Such as the good man ever us'd to give):

Domestic thus the grisly beasts drew near: 250

They gaze with wonder, not unmix'd with fear.

Now on the threshold of the dome they stood,

And heard a voice resounding through the wood:

Plac'd at her loom within, the goddess sung;

The vaulted roofs and solid pavement rung. 255

O'er the fair web the rising figures shine,

Immortal labour! worthy hands divine.

Polites to the rest the question mov'd

(A gallant leader, and a man I lov'd):

'What voice celestial, chanting to the loom 260
(Or nymph, or goddess), echoes from the room?
Say shall we seek access? With that they call;
And wide unfold the portals of the hall.

The goddess rising, asks her guests to stay,
Who blindly follow where she leads the way. 265
Eurylochus alone of all the band,
Suspecting fraud, more prudently remain'd.
On thrones around with downy coverings grac'd,
With semblance fair th' unhappy men she plac'd.
Milk newly press'd, the sacred flour of wheat, 270
And honey fresh, and Pramnian wines the treat:
But venom'd was the bread, and mix'd the bowl,
With drugs of force to darken all the soul:
Soon in the luscious feast themselves they lost,
And drank oblivion of their native coast. 275
Instant her circling wand the goddess waves,
To hogs transforms 'em, and the sty receives.
No more was seen the human form divine;
Head, face, and members, bristle into swine:
Still curs'd with sense, their minds remain alone,
And their own voice affrights them when they
groan. 281

Meanwhile the goddess in disdain bestows
 The mast and acorn, brutal food! and strows
 The fruits of cornel, as their feast, around;
 Now prone and grov'ling on unsav'ry ground. 285

Eurylochus with pensive steps and slow,
 Aghast returns; the messenger of woe,
 And bitter fate. To speak he made essay,
 In vain essay'd, nor would his tongue obey,
 His swelling heart deny'd the words their way:
 But speaking tears the want of words supply, 291
 And the full soul bursts copious from his eye.
 Affrighted, anxious for our fellows' fates,
 We press to hear what sadly he relates.

We went, Ulysses! (such was thy command)
 Through the lone thicket, and the desert land.
 A palace in a woody vale we found
 Brown with dark forests, and with shades around.
 A voice celestial echo'd from the dome,
 Or nymph, or goddess, chanting to the loom. 300
 Access we sought, nor was access deny'd:
 Radiant she came; the portals open'd wide:
 The goddess mild invites the guests to stay:
 They blindly follow where she leads the way.
 I only wait behind, of all the train; 305
 I waited long, and ey'd the doors in vain:

The rest are vanish'd, none repass'd the gate;
And not a man appears to tell their fate.

I heard, and instant o'er my shoulders flung
The belt in which my weighty falchion hung; 310
(A beamy blade) then seiz'd the bended bow,
And bade him guide the way, resolv'd to go.
He, prostrate falling, with both hands embrac'd
My knees, and weeping thus his suit address'd:

O king belov'd of Joye! thy servant spare, 315
And ah, thyself the rash attempt forbear!
Never, alas! thou never shalt return,
Or see the wretched for whose loss we mourn.
With what remains from certain ruin fly,
And save the few not fated yet to die! 320

I answer'd stern: Inglorious then remain,
Here feast and loiter, and desert thy train.
Alone, unfriended, will I tempt my way;
The laws of fate compel, and I obey. 324

This said, and scornful turning from the shore
My haughty step, I stalk'd the valley o'er.
Till now approaching nigh the magic bow'r,
Where dwelt th' enchantress skill'd in herbs of
pow'r;

A form divine forth issu'd from the wood,
(Immortal Hermes with the golden rod) 330

In human semblance. On his bloomy face
 Youth smil'd celestial, with each op'ning grace.
 He seiz'd my hand, and gracious thus began:
 Ah whither roam'st thou? much-enduring man!
 O blind to fate! what led thy steps to rove 335
 The horrid mazes of this magic grove?
 Each friend you seek in yon enclosure lies,
 All lost their form, and habitants of sties.
 Think'st thou by wit to model their escape?
 Sooner shalt thou, a stranger to thy shape, 340
 Fall prone their equal: first thy danger know,
 Then take the antidote the gods bestow.
 The plant I give through all the direful bow'r
 Shall guard thee, and avert the evil hour.
 Now hear her wicked arts. Before thy eyes 345
 The bowl shall sparkle, and the banquet rise;
 Take this, nor from the faithless feast abstain,
 For temper'd drugs and poisons shall be vain.
 Soon as she strikes her wand, and gives the word,
 Draw forth and brandish thy refulgent sword, 350
 And menace death: those menaces shall move
 Her alter'd mind to blandishment and love.
 Nor shun the blessing proffer'd to thy arms;
 Ascend her bed, and taste celestial charms:

So shall th^{er} tedious toils a respite find, 355
 And th^{er} lost friends return to humankind.

But swear her first by those dread oaths that tie
 The pow'rs below, the blessed in the sky;

Lest to thee naked secret fraud be meant,
 Or magic bind thee, cold and impotent. 360

Thus while he spoke, the sov'reign plant he
 drew,

Where on th' all-bearing earth unmark'd it grew,
 And shew'd its nature and its wondrous pow'r:

Black was the root, but milky-white the flow'r;
 Moly the name, to mortals hard to find, 365

But all is easy to th' ethereal kind.

This Hermes gave, then gliding off the glade
 Shot to Olympus from the woodland shade.

While full of thought, revolving fates to come,
 I speed my passage to th' enchanted dome: 370

Arriv'd, before the lofty gates I stay'd;
 The lofty gates the goddess wide display'd;

She leads before, and to the feast invites;

I follow sadly to the magic rites.

Radiant with starry studs, a silver seat 375

Receiv'd my limbs; a footstool eas'd my feet.

She mix'd the potion, fraudulent of soul;

The poison mantled in the golden bowl.

I took, and quaff'd it, confident in heav'n :
 Then wav'd the wand, and then the word was giv'n.
 Hence to thy fellows! (dreadful she began) 381
 Go, be a beast!—I heard, and yet was man.

• Then sudden whirling, like a waving flame,
 My beamy falchion, I assault the dame.
 Struck with unusual fear, she trembling cries, 385
 She faints, she falls; she lifts her weeping eyes.

What art thou? say! from whence, from whom
 you came?

O more than human! tell thy race, thy name.
 Amazing strength, these poisons to sustain!
 Not mortal thou, nor mortal is thy brain. 390
 Or art thou he, the man to come (foretold
 By Hermes pow'ful with the wand of gold),
 The man from Troy, who wander'd ocean round;
 The man for wisdom's various arts renown'd,
 Ulysses? oh! thy threat'ning fury cease, 395
 Sheathe thy bright sword, and join our hands in
 peace;

Let mutual joys our mutual trust combine,
 And love, and love-born confidence be thine.

And how, dread Circe! (furious I rejoin)
 Can love, and love-born confidence be mine? 400

Beneath thy charms when my companions groan,
 Transform'd to beasts, with accents not their own.
 O thou of fraudulent heart ! shall I be led
 To share thy feast-rites, or ascend thy bed ;
 That, all unarm'd, thy vengeance may have vent,
 And magic bind me, cold and impotent? 406
 Celestial as thou art, yet stand deny'd ;
 Or swear that oath by which the gods are ty'd,
 Swear, in thy soul no latent frauds remain,
 Swear by the vow which never can be vain ! 410

The goddess swore : then seiz'd my hand, and
 led

To the sweet transports of the genial bed.
 Ministrant to their queen with busy care
 Four faithful handmaids the soft rites prepare ;
 Nymphs sprung from fountains, or from shady
 woods, 415
 Or the fair offspring of the sacred floods.
 One o'er the couches painted carpets threw,
 Whose purple lustre glow'd against the view :
 White linen lay beneath. Another plac'd
 The silver stands with golden flaskets grac'd : 420
 With dulcet bev'rage this the beaker crown'd,
 Fair in the midst, with gilded cups around :

That in the tripod o'er the kindled pile
 The water pours; the bubbling waters boil:
 An ample vase receives the smoking wave; 425
 And, in the bath prepar'd, my limbs I lave:
 Reviving sweets repair the mind's decay,
 And take the painful sense of toil away.
 A vest and tunic o'er me next she threw, 429
 Fresh from the bath and dropping balmy dew;
 Then led and plac'd me on the sov'reign seat,
 With carpets spread; a footstool at my feet.
 The golden ew'r a nymph obsequious brings,
 Replenish'd from the cool translucent springs;
 With copious water the bright vase supplies 435
 A silver laver of capacious size.
 I wash'd. The table in fair order spread,
 They heap the glitt'ring canisters with bread;
 Viands of various kinds allure the taste,
 Of choicest sort and savour, rich repast!
 Circe in vain invites the feast to share;
 Absent I ponder, and absorpt in care.
 While scenes of woe rose anxious, in my breast,
 The queen beheld me, and these words address:
 Why sits Ulysses silent and apart, 445
 Some hoard of grief close-harbour'd at his heart?

Untouch'd before thee stand the cates divine,
 And unregarded laughs the rosy wine.
 Can yet a doubt, or any dread remain,
 When sworn that oath which never can be vain?

I answer'd, Goddess! humane is thy breast,
 By justice sway'd, by tender pity prest:
 Ill fits it me, whose friends are sunk to beasts,
 To quaff thy bowls, or riot in thy feasts.
 Me wouldst thou please? for them thy cares
 employ,

And them to me restore, and me to joy. 456

With that, she parted: in her potent hand
 She bore the virtue of the magic wand.
 Then hast'ning to the sties set wide the door,
 Urg'd forth, and drove the bristly herd before;
 Unwieldy, out they rush'd, with gen'ral cry, 461
 Enormous beasts dishonest to the eye.

Now touch'd by counter-charms, they change
 again,

And stand majestic, and recall'd to men.
 Those hairs of late that bristled ev'ry part, 465
 Fall off; miraculous effect of art!
 Till all the form in full proportion rise,
 More young, more large, more graceful to my eyes.

They saw, they knew me, and with eager pace,
 Clung to their master in a long embrace; 470
 Sad, pleasing sight! with tears each eye ran o'er,
 And sobs of joy re-echo'd through the bow'r:
 E'en Circe wept, her adamant heart
 Felt pity enter, and sustain'd her part.

Son of Laertes! (then the queen began) 475
 Oh much-enduring, much-experienc'd man!
 Haste to thy vessel on the sea-beat shore,
 Unload thy treasures, and the galley moor;
 Then bring thy friends, secure from future harms,
 And in our grottos stow thy spoils and arms. 480

She said. Obedient to her high command
 I quit the place, and hasten to the strand.
 My sad companions on the beach I found,
 Their wistful eyes in floods of sorrow drown'd
 As from fresh pastures and the dewy field 485
 (When loaded cribs their ev'ning banquet yield)
 The lowing herds return; around them throng
 With leaps and bounds their late-imprison'd
 young,

Rush to their mothers with unruly joy,
 And echoing hills return the tender cry: 490
 So round me press'd, exulting at my sight,
 With cries and agonies of wild delight,

The weeping sailors; nor less fierce their joy
Than if return'd to Ithaca from Troy.

Ah master! ever honour'd, ever dear, 495

(These tender words on ev'ry side I hear)

What other joy can equal thy return?

Not that lov'd country for whose sight we mourn,

The soil that nurs'd us, and that gave us breath:

But ah! relate our lost companions' death. 500

I answer'd cheerful: Haste, your galley moor,

And bring our treasures and our arms ashore:

Those in yon hollow caverns let us lay;

Then rise and follow where I lead the way.

Your fellows live: believe your eyes, and come

To take the joys of Circe's sacred dome. 506

With ready speed the joyful crew obey:

Alone Eurylochus persuades their stay.

Whither (he cry'd) ah whither will ye run?

Seek ye to meet those evils ye should shun? 510

Will you the terrors of the dome explore,

In swine to grovel, or in lions roar,

Or wolf-like howl away the midnight hour

In dreadful watch around the magic bow'r:

Remember Cyclops, and his bloody deed; 515

The leader's rashness made the soldiers bleed.

I heard incens'd, and first resolv'd to speed
 My flying falchion at the rebel's head.
 Dear as he was, by ties of kindred bound,
 This hand had stretch'd him breathless on the
 ground; 520

But all at once my interposing train
 For mercy pleaded, nor could plead in vain.
 Leave here the man who dares his prince desert,
 Leave to repentance and his own sad heart,
 To guard the ship. Seek we the sacred shades
 Of Circe's palace, where Ulysses leads. 526

This with one voice declar'd, the rising train
 Left the black vessel by the murm'ring main.
 Shame touch'd Eurylochus's alter'd breast,
 He fear'd my threats, and follow'd with the rest.

Meanwhile the goddess, with indulgent cares
 And social joys, the late-transform'd repairs;
 The bath, the feast, their fainting soul renews;
 Rich in refulgent robes, and dropping balmy
 dews:

Bright'ning with joy their eager eyes behold 535
 Each other's face, and each his story told;
 Then gushing tears the narrative confound,
 And with their sobs the vaulted roofs resound.

When hush'd their passion, thus the goddess cries :
 Ulysses, taught by labours to be wise, 540
 Let this short memory of grief suffice.

To me are known the various woes ye bore,
 In storms by sea, in perils on the shore ;
 Forget whatever was in fortune's pow'r,
 And share the pleasures of this genial hour. 545
 Such be your minds as ere ye left your coast,
 Or learn'd to sorrow for a country lost.
 Exiles and wand'ers now, where'er ye go,
 Too faithful memory renews your woe ;
 The cause remov'd, habitual griefs remain, 550
 And the soul saddens by the use of pain.

Her kind intreaty mov'd the gen'ral breast ;
 Tir'd with long toil, we willing sunk to rest :
 We ply'd the banquet and the bowl we crown'd,
 Till the full circle of the year came round. 555
 But when the seasons, following in their train,
 Brought back the months, the days, and hours
 again ;

As from a lethargy at once they rise,
 And urge their chief with animating cries.

Is this, Ulysses, our inglorious lot? 560
 And is the name of Ithaca forgot?

Shall never the dear land in prospect rise,
Or the lov'd palace glitter in our eyes

Melting I heard; yet till the sun's decline 564
Prolong'd the feast, and quaff'd the rosy wine:
But when the shades came on at ev'ning hour,
And all lay slumb'ring in the dusky bow'r;
I came a suppliant to fair Circe's bed,
The tender moment seiz'd, and thus I said:

Be mindful, goddess, of thy promise made;
Must sad Ulysses ever be delay'd? 571
Around their lord my sad companions mourn,
Each breast beats homeward, anxious to return:
If but a moment parted from thy eyes,
Their tears flow round me, and my heart complies.

Go then (she cry'd), ah go! yet think, not I,
Not Circe, but the fates your wish deny.
Ah hope not yet to breathe thy native air!
Far other journey first demands thy care;
To tread th' uncomfortable paths beneath, 580
And view the realms of darkness and of death.
There seek the Theban bard, depriv'd of sight;
Within, irradiate with prophetic light;
To whom Persephone, entire and whole,
Gave to retain th' unseparated soul: 585

The rest are forms, of empty æther made;
 Impassive semblance, and a flitting shade.

Struck at the word, my very heart was dead:
 Pensive I sat; my tears bedew'd the bed;
 To hate the light and life my soul begun, 590
 And saw that all was grief beneath the sun.
 Compos'd at length, the gushing tears supprest,
 And my toss'd limbs now weary'd into rest,
 How shall I tread (I cry'd), ah Circe! say,
 The dark descent, and who shall guide the way?
 Can living eyes behold the realms below? 596
 What bark to waft me, and what wind to blow?

Thy fated road (the magic pow'r reply'd)
 Divine Ulysses! asks no mortal guide.
 Rear but the mast, the spacious sail display, 600
 The northern winds shall wing thee on thy way.
 Soon shalt thou reach old ocean's utmost ends,
 Where to the main the shelving shore descends;
 The barren trees of Proserpine's black woods,
 Poplars and willows trembling o'er the floods:
 There fix thy vessel in the lonely bay, 606
 And enter there the kingdoms void of day:
 Where Phlegeton's loud torrents rushing down,
 Hiss in the flaming gulf of Acheron;

And where, slow-rolling from the Stygian bed,
 Cocytus' lamentable waters spread : 611
 Where the dark rock o'erhangs th' infernal lake,
 And mingling streams eternal murmurs make.
 First draw thy falchion, and on ev'ry side
 Trench the black earth a cubit long and wide;
 To all the shades around libations pour, 616
 And o'er th' ingredient strow the hallow'd flour:
 New wine and milk, with honey temper'd, bring,
 And living water from the crystal spring.
 Then the wan shades and feeble ghosts implore,
 With promis'd off'rings on thy native shore; 621
 A barren cow, the stateliest of the isle,
 And, heap'd with various wealth, a blazing pile:
 These to the rest; but to the seer must bleed
 A sable ram, the pride of all thy breed. 625
 These solemn vows and holy off'rings paid
 To all the phantom-nations of the dead;
 Be next thy care the sable sheep to place
 Full o'er the pit, and hell-ward turn their face:
 But from th' infernal rite thine eye withdraw, 630
 And back to ocean glance with rev'rend awe.
 Sudden shall skim along the dusky glades
 Thin airy shoals, and visionary shades.

Then give command the sacrifice to haste,
 Let the ~~fla~~'d victims in the flame be cast, 635
 And sacred vows, and mystic song apply'd
 To grisly Pluto, and his gloomy bride.

Wide o'er the pool, thy falchion wav'd around
 Shall drive the spectres from forbidden ground:
 The sacred draught shall all the dead forbear, 640
 Till awful from the shades arise the seer.

Let him, oraculous, the end, the way,
 The turns of all thy future fate, display,
 Thy pilgrimage to come, and remnant of thy day.

So speaking, from the ruddy orient shone 645
 The morn conspicuous on her golden throne.

The goddess with a radiant tunic drest
 My limbs, and o'er me cast a silken vest.
 Long flowing robes, of purest white, array
 The nymph that added lustre to the day: 650

A tiar wreath'd her head with many a fold;
 Her waist was circled with a zone of gold.
 Forth issuing then, from place to place I flew;
 Rouse man by man, and animate my crew.

Rise, rise my mates! 'tis Circe gives command:
 Our journey calls us; haste, and quit the land.
 All rise and follow, yet depart not all,
 For fate decreed one wretched man to fall.

A youth there was, Elpenor was he nam'd,
 Not much for sense, nor much for cour~~se~~, fam'd;
 The youngest of our band, a vulgar soul 661
 Born but to banquet, and to drain the bowl.
 He, hot and careless, on a turret's height
 With sleep repair'd the long debauch of night;
 The sudden tumult stirr'd him where he lay, 665
 And down he hasten'd, but forgot the way;
 Full endlong from the roof the sleeper fell,
 And snapp'd the spinal joint, and wak'd in hell.

The rest crowd round me with an eager look;
 I met them with a sigh, and thus bespoke: 670
 Already, friends! ye think your toils are o'er,
 Your hopes already touch your native shore:
 Alas! far otherwise the nymph declares,
 Far other journey first demands our cares;
 To tread th' uncomfortable paths beneath, 675
 The dreary realms of darkness and of death:
 To seek Tiresias' awful shade below,
 And thence our fortunes and our fates to know.

My sad companions heard in deep despair;
 Frantic they tore their manly growth of hair; 680
 To earth they fell; the tears began to rain;
 But tears in mortal miseries are vain.

Sadly they far'd along the sea-beat shore ;
 Still heavy'd their hearts, and still their eyes ran
 o'er.

The ready victims at our bark we found, 685
 The sable ewe, and ram, together bound:
 For swift as thought the goddess had been there,
 And thence had glided, viewless as the air:
 The paths of gods what mortal can survey?
 Who eyes their motion ? who shall trace their way?

SELECT NOTES

TO

BOOK X.

V. 1. *We reach'd Æolia's shore*] It is difficult to distinguish what is truth from what is fiction in this relation. Diodorus, who was a Sicilian, speaks of Æolus, and refers to this passage: 'This is that Æolus,' says he, 'who entertained Ulysses, in his voyages: he is reported to have been a pious and just prince, and given to hospitality, and therefore φιλόφρων ἀθανάτοις, as Homer expresses it.' But whence has the fable of his being the governor of the winds taken its foundation? Eustathius tells us, that he was a very wise man, and one who from long observation could foretel what weather was like to follow: others say he was an astronomer, and studied chiefly the nature of the winds; and as Atlas, from his knowledge in astrology, was said to sustain the heavens; so Æolus, from his experience and observation, was fabled to be the ruler or disposer of the winds. But what explication can be given of this bag, in which he is said to bind the winds? Eratosthenes, continues Eustathius, said pleasantly, that we shall then find the places where Ulysses voyaged, when we have discovered the artist, or cobbler, τὸν σκυτεῖα, who sewed up this bag of the winds. But the reason of the fiction is supposed to be this: Æolus taught the use and management of sails, and having foretold Ulysses from what quarter the winds would blow, he may be said to have gathered them into a kind of enclosure, and retained them as use should require. Diodorus explains it a little differently, lib. v. Πρὸς δὲ ταῖς τὴν τῶν ἰστίων χρῆσιν τοῖς ναυτικοῖς ἐπεισηυσάσθαι, καὶ ἀπὸ τῆς τῆς πύργου πρὸς ἡμέρας παρατετηρηκότα, προλεγεῖν τῆς εὐχάρως ἀνέμων εὐστοχῶς, ἐξ ἧς ταμίαν ἀνέμων μῦθος ἀνεδείξῃ; that is, 'He taught the use of sails, and having learned from observing the bearing of the smoke and fires (of these Vulcanian islands) what winds would blow, he usually foretold them with exactness, and from hence he is fabled to be the disposer of the winds.'

The words of Varro, quoted by Servius, are to the same purpose:

‘Varro autem dicit hunc insularum regem fuisse, ex quarum nebulis et fumo Vulcaniæ insulæ prædicens futura flabra ventorum, ab imperitis visus est ventos suâ potestate retinere.’

Polybius will not admit that this story of Æolus is entirely fable; and Strabo is of the same opinion, that Ulysses was in the Sicilian seas; and that there was such a king as Æolus, he affirms to be truth; but that he met with such adventures is, in the main, fiction. There may another reason, as Eustathius observes, be given for the fiction of binding up the winds in a bag: they who practised the art of incantation or charms, made use of the skin of a dolphin, and pretended by certain ceremonies to bind or loose the winds as they pleased; and this practice is a sufficient ground to build upon in poetry.

The solution also of Bochart is worth our notice: Homer borrowed the word Αἰολας from the Phœnician Aol, which signifies a whirlwind or tempest, from whence the Greeks formed their word αἶλας; the Phœnicians observing the king of this island to be very expert in foretelling the winds, called him king Aolin, or king of the winds and storms; from hence Homer formed a proper name, and called him Αἰολος. It must be confessed, that this solution is ingenious, and not without an appearance of probability.

But having laid together what may be said in vindication of this story of Æolus, justice requires that I should not suppress what has been objected against it by no less a critic than Longinus: he observes that a genius naturally lofty sometimes falls into trifling; an instance of this, adds he, is what Homer says of the bag wherein Æolus enclosed the winds. Cap. vii. περι υψους.

V. 3. *A floating isle* . . .] The word in the original is πλωτη; some take it, as Eustathius remarks, for a proper name; but Aristarchus believes Homer intended to express by it a floating island, that was frequently removed by concussions and earthquakes, for it is seen sometimes on the right, at other times on the left hand: the like has been said of Delos; and Herodotus thus describes the island Echemis in the Egyptian seas. Dionysius, in his περιηγησις, affirms, that this island is not called by the name

of *πλωτή*, by reason of its floating, but because it is an island of fame, and much sailed unto, or *πλωτή* by navigators; that is, *πλωμένη*, or *ἐν τοῖς πλωμένοις κείμενη*, or lying in seas of great navigation: but perhaps the former opinion of Aristarchus may be preferable, as it best contributes to raise the wonder and admiration of the credulous ignorant Phæacians, which was the sole intention of Ulysses.

- These islands were seven in number (but eleven at this day), Strongyle, Hiera, Didyme, Hicesia, Lipara, Erycodes, and Phænicodes, all lying in the Sicilian seas, as Diodorus Siculus testifies; but differs in the name of one of the islands.

Strabo is of opinion, that the island called by Homer, the Æolian, is Strongyle; *Ἡ δὲ Στρογγυλή, ἔστι διαπυρρὸς τῷ φεῖγαι πλεονεκτεῖσα, ἐν αὐτῇ δὲ τὸν Αἰὼλον οἰκῆσαι φασί.* 'This island Strongyle abounds with subterraneous fires, &c. and here Æolus is said to have reigned.' Pliny agrees with Strabo, lib. iii. but Dacier understands it to be Lipara, according to Virgil, *Æn.* lib. viii. but in reality the seven were all called the Æolian islands.

‘*Insula Sicanium juxta latus, Æoliamque
Erigitur Liparen, fumantibus ardua saxis.*’

But why is it fabled to be surrounded with a wall of brass? Eustathius says, that this may proceed from its being almost inaccessible; but this reason is not sufficient to give foundation to such a fiction. Dacier observes that it is thus described, because of the subterranean fires, which, from time to time break out from the entrails of this island. Aristotle speaking of Lipara, which is the most considerable of the Æolian islands, thus describes it: ‘all night long the island Lipara appears enlightened with fires.’ The same relation agrees with Strongyle, called Strombolo at this day.

I will take the liberty to propose a conjecture, which may perhaps not unhappily give a reason of this fiction of the wall of brass, from this description of Aristotle: all night fires appear (says that author) from this island, and these fires falling upon the seas, might cast a ruddy reflection round the island, which to navigators might look like a wall of brass enclosing it. This is but a conjecture drawn from appearances; but to write according

to appearances is allowable in poetry, where a seeming or a real truth may be used indifferently.

V. 5. *Six blooming youths . . and six fair daughters.*] Diodorus Siculus mentions the names of the six sons of Æolus, but is silent concerning his daughters, and therefore others, who can find mysteries in the plainest description, assure us, that this is not to be understood historically, but allegorically. But what occasion is there to have recourse to an uncertain allegory, when such great names as Polybius, Strabo, and Diodorus, assure us, that this relation is in part true history; and if there was really such a king as Æolus, why might he not be a father of six sons and as many daughters? I should prefer a plain history to a dark allegory.

V. 9. *All day they feast,*

. . . . and music through the isle resounds.]

Homer was not unacquainted with the wonders related of this island Lipara. ‘In this island,’ says Aristotle, ‘a monument is reported to be, of which they tell miracles: they assure us that they hear issuing from it the sound of timbrels or cymbals, plainly and distinctly.’ It is easy to perceive that this is founded upon the noise the fires make which are enclosed in the caverns in this island, and that Homer alludes to the ancient name of it, which in the Phœnician language (Meloginin, as Bochart observes) signifies the land of those who play upon instruments. We learn from Callimachus, in his Hymn to Diana, that Lipara was originally called Meligounis. ‘She (Diana) went to find out the Cyclops: she found them in Lipara, for that is the name the isle now bears, but anciently it was called Meligounis; they were labouring a huge mass of red hot iron,’ &c. So that Homer is not all invention, but adapts his poetry to tradition and ancient story. Dacier.

V. 32. *The hills display the beacon’s friendly light.*] Eustathius observes, that these fires were a kind of beacons kept continually burning to direct navigators: the smoke gave notice by day, the light of the flame by night. Ithaca was environed with rocks, and consequently there was a necessity for this care, to guide sea-

faring men to avoid those rocks, and to point out the places of landing with security.

But is it not an imputation to the wisdom of Ulysses, to suffer himself to be surprised with sleep, when he was almost ready to enter the ports of his own country? And is it not probable that the joy he must be supposed to receive at the sight of it, should induce him to a few hours watchfulness? It is easier to defend his sleeping here, than in the thirteenth of the *Odyssey*: the poet very judiciously tells us, that Ulysses for nine days together almost continually waked and took charge of the vessel, and the word *κεκμηντα* shews that nature was wearied out, and that he fell into an involuntary repose; it can therefore be no diminution to his character to be forced to yield to the calls of nature, any more than it is to be hungry: his prudence and love of his country sufficiently appear from the care he took through the space of nine days to arrive at it; so that this circumstance must be imputed to the infirmity of human nature, and not to a defect of care or wisdom in Ulysses.

V. 50. *They said: and (oh curs'd fate!) the thongs unbound.]* This relation has been blamed as improbable; what occasion was there to unbind the bag, when these companions of Ulysses might have satisfied their curiosity that there was no treasure in it from the lightness of it? But Homer himself obviates this objection, by telling us that Æolus fastened it in the vessel, as Eustathius observes,

Νηι δ' ἐν γλυφύρῃ κατὰ δει . . .

V. 94. *The shepherd quitting here at night the plain, &c.]* This passage has been thought to be very difficult; but Eustathius makes it intelligible: the land of the Læstrigons was fruitful, and fit for pasturage; it was the practice to tend the sheep by day, and the oxen by night; for it was infested by a kind of fly that was very grievous to the oxen by day, whereas the wool of the sheep defended them from it; and therefore the shepherds drove their oxen to pasture by night. If the same shepherd who watched the sheep by day, could pass the night without sleep, and attend the oxen, he performed a double duty, and consequently merited

a double reward. Homer says, that the ways of the night and day were near to each other, that is, the pastures of the sheep and oxen, and the ways that led to them, were adjacent; for the shepherd that drove his flocks home, (or εἰσελαών, as Homer expresses it) could call to the herdsman, who drove his herds to pasture, or ἐξελαών, and be heard with ease, and therefore the roads must be adjoining.

V. 120. *The daughter of Antiphates, &c.*] It is not evident from whence Ulysses had the knowledge of these particulars; the persons whom he sent to search the land perished in the attempt, or were destroyed with the fleet by the Læstrigons: how then could this relation be made to Ulysses? It is probable that he had his information from Circe or Calypso, for Circe in the sequel of the Odyssey tells Ulysses, that she was acquainted with all the sufferings that he had undergone by sea; and if she, as a goddess, knew his adventures, why might she not relate to him these particulars? Homer a little lower tells us, that the Læstrigons transfixed (ᾤστροντες) the companions of Ulysses, and then carried them away on their weapons like so many fishes; others prefer στροντες, that is, connecting them together like a range of fishes; both which very well express the prodigious strength of these giants: others choose the word ἀσπαιροντας, or, 'they eat them yet alive (*palpitantes*) like fishes.' The preference is submitted to the reader. EUSTATHIUS.

V. 158. *Where Circe dwelt.*] Hesiod in his Theogony agrees with Homer as to the genealogy of Circe and Æetes:

Ἡελίῳ δ' ἀκαμανίῃ τεκε κλυτὴν ὠκεανίη
Περσεΐς, Κίρκην τε καὶ Αἰήτην βασιλῆα.

That is, 'Perseis, the daughter of Oceanus, bore to Phœbus, Circe and king Æetes.' But why are they fabled to be the offspring of the sun? Eustathius answers, either from their high birth, as the great personages of antiquity were called Διογενεῖς, or the sons of Jupiter, and the sun in the ancient mythology represented that deity; or from their extraordinary beauty, which might be compared to the sun; or from their illustrious actions. But perhaps the whole might be derived from the way of speaking among the

Oriental; at this day we are informed from the best historians, that such language prevails in the eastern countries, and kings and great personages are called the brothers or offspring of the sun.

This *Ææa* is a mountain or promontory in Italy: perhaps originally an island, and still keeping the resemblance of it. Thus Procopius, *Gothicorum*, lib. i. ‘*Cerceium haud modico tractu in mare porrectum insulæ speciem fert, tam præternavigantibus quam terrestri itinere prætereuntibus:*’ and Strabo, lib. v. *Κεραίων ἐξ ὧν νοσισαζὸν θαλαττὴν τε καὶ εἰσι.* But is the relation that Homer makes of this island, and of Circe, agreeable to truth? Undoubtedly it is not; but Homer was very well acquainted with the story of Medea, and applies what was reported of that enchantress to Circe, and gives the name of *Ææa* to the island of Circe, in resemblance to *Æa*, a city of Colchos, the country of Medea and *Æetes*. That Homer was not a stranger to the story of Medea is evident, for he mentions the ship *Argo* in the twelfth *Odyssey*, in which Jason sailed to Colchos, where Medea fell in love with him; so that though Circe be a fabled deity, yet what Homer says of her was applicable to the character of another person, and consequently a just foundation for a story in poetry. With this opinion Strabo agrees.

V. 218. *Or where the sun shall set, or where shall rise.*] The interpretations of this passage are various; some, says Eustathius, judge these words not to proceed from the ignorance of Ulysses, but that they are the language of despair suggested by his continual calamities: for how could Ulysses be ignorant of the east or west, when he saw the sun rise and set every day? Others understand it to signify, that he was ignorant of the clime of the world (*ὅσην κοσμικὴν κλιματίζει*) in which this island lay. Strabo was of opinion, that the appearances of the heavenly bodies, as the stars, &c. were different in this island from the position which he had ever before observed in any country, and therefore he might well confess his ignorance, and express his concern for his almost desperate condition. He understands by *ὅς* all that region through which the sun passes opposite to the north. It is true, that the four quarters of the world may be supposed to be here mentioned

by Ulysses; $\nu\omega\varsigma$ may express the southern parts through which the sun passes, and $\zeta\phi\theta$ the opposite quarter, which may be said comparatively to be $\zeta\phi\theta$, or dark? And then the rising and setting of the sun will undeniably denote the eastern and western regions. Spondanus is of opinion, that Homer intended to express the four quarters of the world, otherwise the second verse is a tautology. Dacier calls it an explication of the first description. And indeed the mind of man is apt to dwell long upon any object by which it is deeply affected, as Ulysses must here be supposed to be, and therefore he might enlarge upon the sentiment advanced in the former line. The meaning then will be this. I know not, says that hero, where this island lies, whether east or west, where the sun rises, or where he sets. I should therefore understand Ulysses to mean, that he knows not how the island lies with respect to the rest of the world, and especially to Ithaca, his own country. This is evident from his conduct when he sailed from Formiæ, the land of the Læstrigons; for instead of making toward the east, where Ithaca lay, he bore to this island of Circe, which lies on the west of Formiæ.

V. 242. *Where mountain wolves and brindled lions, &c.*] There is a beautiful moral couched under this fable or allegory: Homer intended to teach, as Eustathius remarks, that pleasure and sensuality debase men into beasts. Thus Socrates understood it, as Xenophon informs us. Perhaps, adds Dacier, by the fawning wolves and lions that guard the portals of Circe's palace, the poet means to represent the attendants of such houses of debauchery, which appear gentle and courteous, but are in reality of a brutal disposition, and more dangerous than lions. But upon what foundation is this fable built? Many writers inform us, that Circe was a famous courtesan, and that her beauty drew her admirers as it were by enchantment. Thus Horace writes,

' Circes pocula nosti,
Quæ si cum sociis stultus, cupidusque bibisset,
Sub dominâ Meretrice fuisset turpis et excors,
Vixisset canis immundus, vel amica luto sus.'

It is evident that Ulysses had a very intimate commerce with

Circe, for Hesiod writes that he had two sons by her, Agrius and Latinus, who afterwards reigned in Tuscany; other authors call them Nausithous and Telegonus.

Κίρκη δ' Ἡελίῳ θυγατρὲς ὑπεριονίδας
 γείνατ' Ὀδυσσῆϊ· τάλισι φρονέειν φιλοτήϊι
 Ἀγρίον, καὶ Λατίνον.

Dionysius Halicarnassus and Aristotle mention Telegonus as the son of Circe and Ulysses, who afterwards slew his father with the bone of a fish inadvertently. Thus Horace,

‘Telegoni juga parricidæ.’

But then, is not this intrigue a breach of morality, and conjugal fidelity in that hero? I refer the reader to note on ver. 198 of the fifth book of the *Odyssey*: I shall only add that the notions of morality are now very different from what they were in former ages. Adultery alone was esteemed criminal, and punished with death by the ancient heathens; concubinage was not only permitted, but thought to be honourable, as appears from the practice, not only of heroes, but even of the pagan deities; and consequently this was the vice of the age, not in particular of Ulysses. But there is a stronger objection against Ulysses, and it may be asked, how is he to be vindicated for wasting no less space than a whole year in dalliance with an harlot? Penelope and his country seem both forgotten, and consequently he appears to neglect his own re-establishment, the chief design of the *Odyssey*; what adds some weight to this observation is, that his companions seem more sensible of his long absence from his country, and regret it more than that hero; for they awake him out of his dream, and entreat him to depart from the island. It is therefore necessary to take away this objection: for if it be unanswerable, Ulysses is guilty of all the miseries of his family and country, by neglecting to redress them by returning, and therefore he must cease to be an hero, and is no longer to be proposed as a pattern of wisdom, and imitation, as he is in the opening of the *Odyssey*. But the stay of Ulysses is involuntary, and consequently irreproachable; he is in the power of a deity, and therefore not capable of depart-

ing without her permission: this is evident; for upon the remonstrance made by his companions, he dares not undertake his voyage without her dismissal. His asking consent plainly shews that it was not safe, if practicable, to go away without it; if he had been a free agent, her leave had been unnecessary: it is true, she tells him she will not detain him any longer against his inclinations; but this does not imply that his stay till then had been voluntary, or that he never had entreated to be dismissed before, but rather intimates the contrary: it only shews that now at last she is willing he should go away. But why should Ulysses stand in need of being admonished by his companions? Does not this imply that he was unmindful of returning? This is only an evidence that they were desirous to return as well as he; but he makes a wise use of their impatience, and takes an occasion from their importunities to press for an immediate dismissal.

In short, I am not pleading for perfection in the character of Ulysses: human nature allows it not, and therefore it is not to be ascribed to it in poetry. But if Ulysses were here guilty, his character ceases to be of a piece: we no longer interest ourselves in his misfortunes, since they are all owing to his own folly: the nature of the poem requires, that he should be continually endeavouring to restore his affairs: if then he be here sunk into a lethargy, his character is at once lost, his calamities are a just punishment, and the moral of the *Odyssey* is destroyed, which is to shew wisdom and virtue rewarded, and vice and folly punished by the death of the suitors and the re-establishment of Ulysses.

V. 295, &c. *We went, Ulysses! (such was thy command.)*] We have here a very lively picture of a person in a great fright, which was admired, observes Eustathius, by the ancients. There is not only a remarkable harmony in the flowing of the poetry, but the very manner of speaking represents the disorder of the speaker; he is in too great an emotion to introduce his speech by any preface, he breaks at once into it, without preparation, as if he could not soon enough deliver his thoughts. Longinus quotes these lines as an instance of the great judgment of Homer: there is nothing, says that critic, which gives more life to a discourse, than the taking away the connexions and conjunctions; when

the discourse is not bound together and embarrassed, it walks and slides along of itself, and will want very little oftentimes of going faster even than the thought of the orator: thus in Xenophon, 'Joining their bucklers, they gave back, they fought, they slew, they died together;' of the same nature is that of Eurylochus:

'We went, Ulysses — such was thy command — —
Access we sought — nor was access deny'd:
Radiant she came — the portals open'd wide, &c.
I only wait behind — of all the train;
I waited long — and ey'd the doors in vain:
The rest are vanish'd — none repass'd the gate.'

These periods thus cut off, and yet pronounced with precipitation, are signs of a lively sorrow; which at the same time hinders, yet forces him to speak.

Many sudden transitions are to be found in Virgil, of equal beauty with this of Homer.

V. 361. . . . *The sov'reign plant he drew,
Where on th' all-bearing earth unmark'd it grew, &c.]*

This whole passage is to be understood allegorically. Mercury is reason, he being the god of science: the plant which he gives as a preservative against incantation is instruction; the root of it is black, the flower white and sweet; the root denotes that the foundation or principles of instruction appear obscure and bitter, and are distasteful at first, according to that saying of Plato, 'The beginnings of instruction are always accompanied with reluctance and pain.' The flower of Moly is white and sweet; this denotes that the fruits of instruction are sweet, agreeable, and nourishing. Mercury gives this plant; this intimates, that all instruction is the gift of heaven: Mercury brings it not with him, but gathers it from the place where he stands, to shew that wisdom is not confined to places, but that every where it may be found, if heaven vouchsafes to discover it, and we are disposed to receive and follow it. Thus Isocrates understands the allegory of Moly; he adds, Πικραν ειναι ριζαν αυτης, το δε Μωλυ ανθος λευκον καλα γαλα, δια την τη τιλης παιδειας λαμπροτητα, ηδη και το ηδυ και τροφιμον. 'The root of Moly is bitter, but the flower of it white as milk, to de-

note the excellency of instruction, as well as the pleasure and utility of it in the end.' He further illustrates the allegory, by adding *Καρπὸς τῆς παιδείας εἰ καὶ μὴ γαλακτὶ κελευς, ἀλλὰ γλυκύς, &c.* That is, 'the fruits of instruction are not only white as milk, but sweet, though they spring from a bitter root.' EUSTATHIUS.

Maximus Tyrius also gives this story an allegorical sense, Dissert. xv. *Αὐτὸν μὲν τὸν Ὀδυσσεὺς ἔχ' ὄρας, ὡς πανόλαις συμφοραῖς ἀντίλεχνομεν ὅτι ἀρετῇ σωζοί, τὰτο αὐτῷ τὸ ἐκ Κίρκης Μῶλυ, τὰτο τὸ ἐν θαλαττῇ κρηδεύον;* that is, 'Dost thou not observe Ulysses, how by opposing virtue to adversity he preserves his life? This is the Moly that protects him from Circe, this is the scarf that delivers him from the storm, from Polypheme, from hell,' &c. See also Dissert. xix.

It is pretended that Moly is an Egyptian plant, and that it was really made use of as a preservative against enchantments: but I believe the Moly of Mercury, and the Nepenthe of Helen, are of the same production, and grow only in poetical ground.

V. 379. *I took, and quaff'd it, confident in heav'n*] It may be asked if Ulysses is not as culpable as his companions, in drinking this potion? Where lies the difference? and how is the allegory carried on, when Ulysses yields to the solicitation of Circe, that is pleasure, and indulges, not resists, his appetites? The moral of the fable is, that all pleasure is not unlawful, but the excess of it: we may enjoy, provided it be with moderation. Ulysses does not taste till he is fortified against it; whereas his companions yielded without any care or circumspection; they indulged their appetites only, Ulysses takes merely out of a desire to deliver his associates: he makes himself master of Circe, or pleasure, and is not in the power of it, and enjoys it upon his own terms: they are slaves to it, and out of a capacity ever to regain their freedom but by the assistance of Ulysses. The general moral of the whole fable of Circe is, that pleasure is as dreadful an enemy as danger, and a Circe as hard to be conquered as a Polypheme.

V. 414. *Four faithful handmaids, &c.*] This large description of the entertainment in the palace of Circe, is particularly judicious; Ulysses is in an house of pleasure, and the poet dwells

upon it, and shews how every circumstance contributes to promote and advance it. The attendants are all nymphs, and the bath and perfumes usher in the feast and wines. The four verses that follow are omitted by Dacier, and they are marked in Eustathius as superfluous; they are to be found in other parts of the *Odyssey*; but that, I confess, would be no argument why they should not stand here (such repetitions being frequent in Homer), if they had a due propriety, but they contain a tautology. We see before a table spread for the entertainment of Ulysses, why then should that circumstance be repeated? If they are omitted, there will no chasm or incoherence appear, and therefore probably they were not originally inserted here by Homer.

V. 485. *As from fresh pastures and the dewy field, &c.*] If this simile were to be rendered literally, it would run thus; ‘as calves seeing the droves of cows returning at night when they are filled with their pasturage, run skipping out to meet them; the stalls no longer detain them, but running round their dams they fill the plain with their lowings, &c.’ If a similitude of this nature were to be introduced into modern poetry, I am of opinion it would fall under ridicule for want of delicacy: but in reality, images drawn from nature, and a rural life, have always a very good effect; in particular, this before us enlivens a melancholy description of sorrows, and so exactly expresses in every point the joy of Ulysses’s companions, we see them in the very description. To judge rightly of comparisons, we are not to examine if the subject from whence they are derived be great or little, noble or familiar, but we are principally to consider if the image produced be clear and lively, if the poet have skill to dignify it by poetical words, and if it perfectly paints the thing it is intended to represent. This rule fully vindicates Homer: though he frequently paints low life, yet he never uses terms which are not noble; or if he uses humble words or phrases, it is with so much art, that, as Dionysius observes, they become noble and harmonious. In short, a top may be used with propriety and elegance in a similitude by a Virgil, and the sun may be dishonoured by a Mævius; a mean thought expressed in noble terms being more tolerable, than a noble thought disgraced by mean expressions. Things

that have an intrinsic greatness need only to be barely represented to fill the soul with admiration, but it shews the skill of a poet to raise a low subject, and exalt common appearances into dignity.

V. 579. *Far other journey*

To tread th' uncomfortable paths beneath.]

There should in all the episodes of epic poetry appear a convenience, if not a necessity of every incident; it may therefore be asked what necessity there is for this descent of Ulysses into hell, to consult the shade of Tiresias? Could not Circe, who was a goddess, discover to him all the future contingencies of his life? Eustathius excellently answers this objection: Circe declares to Ulysses the necessity of consulting Tiresias, that he may learn from the mouth of that prophet, that his death was to be from the ocean; she acts thus in order to dispose him to stay with her, after his return from the regions of the dead; or, if she cannot persuade him to stay with her, that she may at least secure him from returning to her rival Calypso: she had promised him immortality, but by this descent, he will learn that it is decreed that he should receive his death from the ocean; for he died by the bone of a sea-fish called Xiphias. Her love for Ulysses induces her not to make the discovery herself, for it was evident she would not find credit, but Ulysses would impute it to her love, and the desire she had to deter him from leaving her island. This will appear more probable, if we observe the conduct of Circe in the future parts of the *Odyssey*: she relates to him the dangers of Scylla and Charybdis, of the oxen of Phœbus, and the Sirens; but says nothing concerning his death: this likewise gives an air of probability to the relation. The isle of Circe was adjoining to Scylla and Charybdis, &c. and consequently she may be supposed to be acquainted with those places, and give an account of them to Ulysses with exactness, but she leaves the decrees of heaven and the fate of Ulysses to the narration of the prophet, it best suiting his character to see into futurity. By the descent of Ulysses into hell may be signified that a wise man ought to be ignorant of nothing; that he ought to ascend in thought into heaven, and un-

derstand the heavenly appearances, and be acquainted with what is contained in the bowels of the earth, and bring to light the secrets of nature; that he ought to know the nature of the soul, what it suffers, and how it acts after it is separated from the body. EUSTATHIUS.

V. 584. *To whom Persephone, &c.*] Homer here gives the reason why Tiresias should be consulted, rather than any other ghost, because

Τὴ τε φρένας ἐμπεδοὶ εἰσι

This expression is fully explained, and the notion of the soul after death, which prevailed among the ancients, is set in a clear light, verse 92, and 124, of the xxiii^d book of the Iliad, to which passages I refer the readers. But whence had Tiresias this privilege above the rest of the dead? Callimachus ascribes it to Pluto:

Καί μιν εὐτε θάνη, πεπνυμένον ἐν νεκυεσσὶ
Ψοίλαται, μεγάλῳ τιμῷ Ἀγέσταν.

Tully mentions this pre-eminence of Tiresias in his first book of Divination. Perhaps the whole fiction may arise from his great reputation among the ancients for prophecy; and in honour to his memory, they might imagine that his soul after death retained the same superiority. Ovid, in his Metamorphoses, gives us a very jocular reason for the blindness and prophetic knowledge of Tiresias, from a matrimonial contest between Jupiter and Juno. Cato Major, as Plutarch in his Political Precepts informs us, applied this verse to Scipio, when he was made consul contrary to the Roman statutes:

Οἷός πεπνύλαι, τοὶ δὲ σκιαὶ αἰσθῶσιν.

But I ought not to suppress what Diodorus Siculus relates concerning Tiresias. Biblioth. lib. iv. he tells us, that he had a daughter named Daphne, a priestess at Delphi: Παρ' ἧς φασὶ καὶ τὴν ποιεῖν Ὅμηρον πολλὰ τῶν ἑπῶν σφείρισθαι, κοσμεῖν τὴν ἰδίαν ποιήσιν. That is, 'From whom it is said, that the poet Homer received many (of the Sibyls) verses, and adorned his own

poetry with them.' If this be true, there lay a debt of gratitude upon Homer, and he pays it honourably, by this distinguishing character, which he gives to the father. An instance of a worthy disposition in the poet, and it remains at once an honour to Tiresias, and a monument of his own gratitude.

V. 602. *Soon shalt thou reach old Ocean's utmost ends, &c.*] This whole scene is excellently imagined by the poet, as Eustathius observes; the trees are all barren, the place is upon the shores where nothing grows; and all the rivers are of a melancholy signification, suitable to the ideas we have of those infernal regions. Ulysses arrives at this place, where he calls up the shades of the dead, in the space of one day; from whence we may conjecture, that he means a place that lies between Cumæ and Baiæ, near the lake Avernus, in Italy; which, as Strabo remarks, is the scene of the necromancy of Homer, according to the opinion of antiquity. He further adds, that there really are such rivers as Homer mentions, though not placed in their true situation, according to the liberty allowable to poetry. Others write, that the Cimmerii once inhabited Italy, and that the famous cave of Pausilipe was begun by them about the time of the Trojan wars: here they offered sacrifice to the manes, which might give occasion to Homer's fiction. The Grecians, who inhabited these places after the Cimmerians, converted these dark habitations into stoves, baths, &c.

Silius Italicus writes, that the Lucrine lake was anciently called Cocytus, lib. xii.

'Ast hic Lucrino mansisse vocabula quondam
Cocyti memorat.'

It is also probable, that Acheron was the ancient name of Avernus, because Acherusia, a large water near Cumæ, flows into it by concealed passages. Silius Italicus informs us, that Avernus was also called Styx:

'Ille olim populis dictum Styga, nomine verso,
Stagna inter celebrem nunc mitia monstrat Avernum.'

Here Hannibal offered sacrifice to the manes, as it is recorded by

Livy : and Tully affirms it from an ancient poet, from whom he quotes the following fragment :

‘ Inde in viciniâ nostrâ Averni lacus,
Unde animæ excitantur obscurâ umbra,
Alti Acherontis aperto ostio.’

This may seem to justify the observation that Acheron was once the name of Avernus, though the words are capable of a different interpretation.

THE
ELEVENTH BOOK
OF THE
ODYSSEY.

THE ARGUMENT.

THE DESCENT INTO HELL.

ULYSSES continues his narration, How he arrived at the land of the Cimmerians, and what ceremonies he performed to invoke the dead. The manner of his descent, and the apparition of the shades: his conversation with Elpenor, and with Tiresias, who informs him in a prophetic manner of his fortunes to come. He meets his mother Anticlea, from whom he learns the state of his family. He sees the shades of the ancient heroines, afterwards of the heroes, and converses in particular with Agamemnon and Achilles. Ajax keeps at a sullen distance, and disdains to answer him. He then beholds Tityus, Tantalus, Sisyphus, Hercules: till he is deterred from further curiosity by the apparition of horrid spectres, and the cries of the wicked in torments.



Painted by H^d Fuseli R.A.

Engraved by Isaac Taylor

BOOK XI.

Now to the shores we bend, a mournful train,
Climb the tall bark, and launch into the main:
At once the mast we rear, at once unbind
The spacious sheet, and stretch it to the wind:
Then pale and pensive stand, with cares opprest, 5
And solemn horror saddens ev'ry breast.
A fresh'ning breeze the magic pow'r supply'd,
While the wing'd vessel flew along the tide;
Our oars we shipp'd: all day the swelling sails
Full from the guiding pilot catch'd the gales. 10

Now sunk the sun from his aërial height,
And o'er the shaded billows rush'd the night:
When lo! we reach'd old Ocean's utmost bounds,
Where rocks control his waves with ever-during
mounds.

There in a lonely land, and gloomy cells, 15
The dusky nation of Cimmeria dwells;
The sun ne'er views th' uncomfortable seats,
When radiant he advances, or retreats:

Unhappy race! whom endless night invades,
 Clouds the dull air, and wraps them round in
 shades. 20

The ship we moor on these obscure abodes;
 Disbark the sheep, an off'ring to the gods;
 And hell-ward bending, o'er the beach descry
 The dolesome passage to th' infernal sky.
 The victims, vow'd to each Tartarean pow'r, 25
 Eurylochus and Perimedes bore.

Here open'd hell, all hell I here implor'd,
 And from the scabbard drew the shining sword;
 And trenching the black earth on ev'ry side,
 A cavern form'd, a cubit long and wide. 30
 New wine, with honey-temper'd milk, we bring,
 Then living waters from the crystal spring;
 O'er these was strew'd the consecrated flour,
 And on the surface shone the holy store.

Now the wan shades we hail, th' infernal
 gods, 35
 To speed our course, and waft us o'er the floods:
 So shall a barren heifer from the stall
 Beneath the knife upon your altars fall;
 So in our palace, at our safe return,
 Rich with unnumber'd gifts the pile shall burn;

So shall a ram the largest of the breed, 41
 Black as these regions, to Tiresias bleed.

Thus solemn rites and holy vows we paid
 To all the phantom-nations of the dead.
 Then died the sheep; a purple torrent flow'd, 45
 And all the caverns smok'd with streaming blood
 When lo! appear'd along the dusky coasts,
 Thin, airy shoals of visionary ghosts;
 Fair, pensive youths, and soft enamour'd maids;
 And wither'd elders, pale and wrinkled shades; 50
 Ghastly with wounds the forms of warriors slain
 Stalk'd with majestic port, a martial train:
 These and a thousand more swarm'd o'er the
 ground,

And all the dire assembly shriek'd around.
 Astonish'd at the sight, aghast I stood, 55
 And a cold fear ran shiv'ring through my blood;
 Straight I command the sacrifice to haste,
 Straight the flay'd victims to the flames are cast,
 And mutter'd vows, and mystic song apply'd
 To grisly Pluto, and his gloomy bride. 60

Now swift I wav'd my falchion o'er the blood;
 Back started the pale throngs, and trembling
 stood,

Round the black trench the gore untasted flows,
Till awful from the shades Tiresias rose.

There wand'ring through the gloom, I first
survey'd, 65

New to the realms of death, Elpenor's shade:
His cold remains all naked to the sky
On distant shores unwept, unburied lie.
Sad at the sight I stand, deep fix'd in woe,
And ere I spoke the tears began to flow. 70

O say what angry pow'r Elpenor led
To glide in shades, and wander with the dead?
How could thy soul, by realms and seas disjoin'd,
Outfly the nimble sail, and leave the lagging
wind?

The ghost reply'd: To hell my doom I owe, 75
Demons accurst, dire ministers of woe!
My feet, through wine unfaithful to their weight,
Betray'd me tumbling from a tow'ry height:
Stagg'ring I reel'd, and as I reel'd I fell,
Lux'd the neck-joint—my soul descends to hell.
But lend me aid, I now conjure thee lend, 81
By the soft tie and sacred name of friend!
By thy fond consort! by thy father's cares!
By lov'd Telemachus's blooming years!

For well I know that soon the heav'nly pow'rs 85
Will give thee back to day and Circe's shores :

There pious on my cold remains attend,
There call to mind thy poor departed friend,
The tribute of a tear is all I crave,
And the possession of a peaceful grave. 90

But if unheard, in vain compassion plead,
Revere the gods, the gods avenge the dead!

A tomb along the wat'ry margin raise,
The tomb with manly arms and trophies grace,
To shew posterity Elpenor was. 95

There high in air, memorial of my name,
Fix the smooth oar, and bid me live to fame.

To whom with tears: These rites, O mournful
shade,

Due to thy ghost, shall to thy ghost be paid. 99

Still as I spoke the phantom seem'd to moan,
Tear follow'd tear, and groan succeeded groan.
But as my waving sword the blood surrounds,
The shade withdrew, and mutter'd empty sounds.

There as the wond'rous visions I survey'd,
All pale ascends my royal mother's shade: 105
A queen, to Troy she saw our legions pass;
Now a thin form is all Anticlea was!

Struck at the sight I melt with filial woe,
 And down my cheek the pious sorrows flow :
 Yet as 'I shook my falchion o'er the blood, 110
 Regardless of her son the parent stood.

When lo! the mighty Theban I behold;
 To guide his steps he bore a staff of gold :
 Awful he trod! majestic was his look!
 And from his holy lips these accents broke: 115

Why, mortal, wand'rest thou from cheerful
 day,

To tread the downward melancholy way?
 What angry gods to these dark legions led
 Thee yet alive, companion of the dead? 119
 But sheathe thy poniard, while my tongue relates
 Heav'n's stedfast purpose, and thy future fates.

While yet he spoke, the prophet I obey'd,
 And in the scabbard plung'd the glitt'ring blade.
 Eager he quaff'd the gore, and then exprest 124
 Dark things to come, the counsels of his breast.

Weary of light, Ulysses here explores,
 A prosp'rous voyage to his native shores :
 But know—by me unerring Fates disclose
 New trains of dangers, and new scenes of woes;
 I see! I see, thy bark by Neptune tost, 130
 For injur'd Cyclops, and his eye-ball lost!

Yet to thy woes the gods decree an end,
 If heav'n thou please; and how to please attend!
 Where on Trinacrian rocks the ocean roars, 134
 Graze num'rous herds along the verdant shores;
 Though hunger press, yet fly the dang'rous prey,
 The herds are sacred to the god of day,
 Who all surveys with his extensive eye,
 Above, below, on earth and in the sky!
 Rob not the god, and so propitious gales 140
 Attend thy voyage, and impel thy sails;
 But if his herds ye seize, beneath the waves
 I see thy friends o'erwhelm'd in liquid graves!
 The direful wreck Ulysses scarce survives!
 Ulysses at his country scarce arrives! 145
 Strangers thy guides! nor there thy labours end,
 New foes arise, domestic ills attend!
 There foul adult'ers to thy bride resort,
 And lordly gluttons riot in thy court. 149 •
 But vengeance hastes amain: These eyes behold
 The deathful scene, princes on princes roll'd!
 That done, a people far from sea explore,
 Who ne'er knew salt, or heard the billows roar,
 Or saw gay vessel stem the wat'ry plain,
 A painted wonder flying on the main! 155

Bear on thy back an oar: with strange amaze
 A shepherd meeting thee, the oar surveys,
 And names a van: there fix it on the plain,
 To calm the god that holds the wat'ry reign;
 A threefold off'ring to his altar bring, 160
 A bull, a ram, a boar; and hail the ocean-king.
 But home return'd, to each ethereal pow'r
 Slay the due victim in the genial hour:
 So peaceful shalt thou end thy blissful days,
 And steal thyself from life by slow decays: 165
 Unknown to pain, in age resign thy breath,
 When late stern Neptune points the shaft with
 death,

To the dark grave retiring as to rest,
 Thy people blessing, by thy people blest!

Unerring truths, O man, my lips relate; 170
 This is thy life to come, and this is fate.

To whom unmov'd: If this the gods prepare;
 What heav'n ordains, the wise with courage bear.
 But say, why yonder on the lonely strands,
 Unmindful of her son, Anticlea stands? 175
 Why to the ground she bends her downcast eye?
 Why is she silent, while her son is nigh?
 The latent cause, O sacred seer, reveal!

Nor this, replies the seer, will I conceal.

Know; to the spectres, that thy bev'rage taste,
 The scenes of life recur, and actions past; 181
 They, seal'd with truth, return the sure reply;
 The rest, repell'd, a train oblivious fly.

The phantom-prophet ceas'd, and sunk from
 sight

To the black palace of eternal night. 185

Still in the dark abodes of death I stood,
 When near Anticlea mov'd, and drank the blood.
 Straight all the mother in her soul awakes,
 And owning her Ulysses, thus she speaks : 189
 Com'st thou, my son, alive, to realms beneath,
 The dolesome realms of darkness and of death:
 Com'st thou alive from pure, ethereal day?

Dire is the region, dismal is the way!

Hère lakes profound, there floods oppose their
 waves,

There the wide sea with all his billows raves! 195
 Or (since to dust proud Troy submits her tow'rs)
 Com'st thou a wand'rer from the Phrygian shores?
 Or say, since honour call'd thee to the field,
 Hast thou thy Ithaca, thy bride, beheld?

Source of my life, I cry'd, from earth I fly
 To seek Tiresias in the nether sky, 201

To learn my doom; for tost from woe to woe,
 In ev'ry land Ulysses finds a foe:
 Nor have these eyes beheld my native shores; 204
 Since in the dust proud Troy submits her tow'rs.

But, when thy soul from her sweet mansion
 fled,

Say, what distemper gave thee to the dead?
 Has life's fair lamp declin'd by slow decays,
 Or swift expir'd it in a sudden blaze?
 Say, if my sire, good old Laertes, lives? 210
 If yet Telemachus, my son, survives?
 Say, by his rule is my dominion aw'd,
 Or crush'd by traitors with an iron rod?
 Say, if my spouse maintains her royal trust,
 Though tempted chaste, and obstinately just? 215
 Or if no more her absent lord she wails,
 But the false woman o'er the wife prevails?

Thus I, and thus the parent-shade returns:
 Thee, ever thee, thy faithful consort mourns:
 Whether the night descends, or day prevails, 220
 Thee she by night, and thee by day bewails:
 Thee in Telemachus thy realm obeys;
 In sacred groves celestial rites he pays,
 And shares the banquet in superior state, 224
 Grac'd with such honours as become the great.

Thy sire in solitude foment's his care :
 The court is joyless, for thou art not there !
 No costly carpets raise his hoary head,
 No rich embroid'ry shines to grace his bed ;
 E'en when keen winter freezes in the skies, 230
 Rank'd with his slaves, on earth the monarch lies :
 Deep are his sighs, his visage pale, his dress
 The garb of woe and habit of distress.
 And when the autumn takes his annual round,
 The leafy honours scatt'ring on the ground ; 235
 Regardless of his years, abroad he lies,
 His bed the leaves, his canopy the skies.
 Thus cares on cares his painful days consume,
 And bow his age with sorrow to the tomb !

For thee, my son, I wept my life away ; 240
 For thee through hell's eternal dungeons stray :
 Nor came my fate by ling'ring pains and slow,
 Nor bent the silver-shafted queen her bow ;
 No dire disease bereav'd me of my breath ;
 Thou, thou, my son, wert my disease and death ;
 Unkindly with my love my son conspir'd, 246
 For thee I liv'd, for absent thee expir'd.

Thrice in my arms I strove her shade to bind,
 Thrice thro' my arms she slipp'd like empty wind
 Or dreams, the vain illusions of the mind. 250

Wild with despair, I shed a copious tide
Of flowing tears, and thus with sighs reply'd :

Fly'st thou, lov'd shade, while I thus fondly mourn?
Turn to my arms, to my embraces turn!
Is it, ye pow'rs that smile at human harms, 255
Too great a bliss to weep within her arms?
Or has hell's queen an empty image sent,
That wretched I might e'en my joys lament?

O son of woe, the pensive shade rejoin'd,
O most inur'd to grief of all mankind! 260
'Tis not the queen of hell who thee deceives:
All, all are such, when life the body leaves;
No more the substance of the man remains,
Nor bounds the blood along the purple veins:
These the funereal flames in atoms bear, 265
To wander with the wind in empty air;
While the impassive soul reluctant flies,
Like a vain dream, to these infernal skies.
But from the dark dominions speed thy way,
And climb the steep ascent to upper day; 270
To thy chaste bride the wond'rous story tell,
The woes, the horrors, and the laws of hell.

Thus while she spoke, in swarms hell's empress
brings
Daughters and wives of heroes and of kings;

Thick, and more thick they gather round the blood,
 Ghost throng'd on ghost (a dire assembly) stood !
 Dauntless my sword I seize : the airy crew,
 Swift as it flash'd along the gloom, withdrew ;
 Then shade to shade in mutual forms succeeds,
 Her race recounts, and their illustrious deeds. 280

Tyro began : whom great Salmonæus bled ;
 The royal partner of fam'd Crætheus' bed.
 For fair Enipeus, as from fruitful urns
 He pours his wat'ry store, the virgin burns ;
 Smooth flows the gentle stream with wanton pride,
 And in soft mazes rolls a silver tide. 286

As on his banks the maid enamour'd roves,
 The monarch of the deep beholds and loves ;
 In her Enipeus' form and borrow'd charms,
 The am'rous god descends into her arms : 290

Around, a spacious arch of waves he throws,
 And high in air the liquid mountain rose ;
 Thus in surrounding floods conceal'd he proves
 The pleasing transport, and completes his loves.

Then softly sighing, he the fair addrest, 295
 And as he spoke her tender hand he prest.

Hail, happy nymph ! no vulgar births are ow'd
 To the prolific raptures of a god :

Lo! when nine times the moon renews her horn,
 Two brother heroes shall from thee be born; 300
 Thy early care the future worthies claim,
 To point them to the arduous paths of fame;
 But in thy breast th' important truth conceal,
 Nor dare the secret of a god reveal: 304

For know, thou Neptune view'st! and at my nod
 Earth trembles, and the waves confess their god.

He added not, but mounting spurn'd the plain,
 Then plung'd into the chambers of the main.

Now in the time's full process forth she brings
 Jove's dread vicegerents, in two future kings; 310
 O'er proud Iolcos Pelias stretch'd his reign,
 And godlike Neleus rul'd the Pylian plain:
 Then fruitful, to her Cretheus' royal bed
 She gallant Pheres and fam'd Æson bred:
 From the same fountain Amythaon rose, 315
 Pleas'd with the din of war, and noble shout of
 foes.

There mov'd Antiope with haughty charms,
 Who bless'd th' almighty thund'rer in her arms:
 Hence sprung Amphion, hence brave Zethus came,
 Founders of Thebes, and men of mighty name;
 Though bold in open field, they yet surround
 The town with walls, and mound inject on mound;

Here ramparts stood, there tow'rs rose high in air,
And here through sev'n wide portals rush'd the
war.

There with soft step the fair Alcmena trod,
Who bore Alcides to the thund'ring god;
And Megara, who charm'd the son of Jove,
And soften'd his stern soul to tender love.

Sullen and sour with discontented mien 329
Jocasta frown'd, th' incestuous Theban queen;
With her own son she join'd in nuptial bands,
Though father's blood imbru'd his murd'rous
 hands:

The gods and men the dire offence detest,
The gods with all their furies rend his breast:
In lofty Thebes he wore th' imperial crown, 335
A pompous wretch! accurs'd upon a throne.
The wife self-murder'd from a beam depends,
And her foul soul to blackest hell descends;
Thence to her son the choicest plagues she brings,
And the fiends haunt him with a thousand stings.

And now the beauteous Chloris I descry, 341
A lovely shade, Amphion's youngest joy!
With gifts unnumber'd Neleus sought her arms,
Nor paid too dearly for unequall'd charms;

Great in Orchomenos, in Pylos great, 345
 He sway'd the sceptre with imperial state.
 Three gallant sons the joyful monarch told,
 Sage Nestor, Periclimenus the bold,
 And Chromius last; but of the softer race,
 One nymph alone, a miracle of grace. 350
 Kings on their thrones for lovely Pero burn,
 The sire denies, and kings rejected mourn.
 To him alone the beauteous prize he yields,
 Whose arm should ravish from Phylacian fields
 The herds of Iphyclus, detain'd in wrong; 355
 Wild, furious herds, unconquerably strong!
 This dares a seer, but nought the seer prevails,
 In beauty's cause illustriously he fails;
 Twelve moons the foe the captive youth detains
 In painful dungeons, and coercive chains; 360
 The foe at last, from durance where he lay,
 His art revering, gave him back to day;
 Won by prophetic knowledge, to fulfil
 The stedfast purpose of th' almighty will.

With graceful port advancing now I spy'd
 Leda the fair, the godlike Tyndar's bride: 366
 Hence Pollux sprung who wields with furious sway
 The deathful gauntlet, matchless in the fray:

And Castor glorious on th' embattled plain.

Curbs the proud steed, reluctant to the rein: 370

By turns they visit this ethereal sky,

And live alternate, and alternate die:

In hell beneath, on earth, in heav'n above

Reign the twin-gods, the fav'rite sons of Jove.

There Ephimedia trod the gloomy plain, 375

Who charm'd the monarch of the boundless main;

Hence Ephialtes, hence stern Otus sprung,

More fierce than giants, more than giants strong;

The earth o'erburden'd groan'd beneath their weight,

None but Orion e'er surpass'd their height: 380

The wond'rous youths had scarce nine winters told,

When high in air, tremendous to behold,

Nine ells aloft they rear'd their tow'ring head,

And full nine cubits broad their shoulders spread.

Proud of their strength and more than mortal size,

The gods they challenge, and affect the skies;

Heav'd on Olympus tott'ring Ossa stood;

On Ossa, Pelion nods with all his wood:

Such were they youths! had they to manhood
grown,

Almighty Jove had trembled on his throne. 390

But ere the harvest of the beard began

To bristle on the chin, and promise man,

His shafts Apollo aim'd; at once they sound,
And stretch the giant-monsters o'er the ground.

There mournful Phædra with sad Procris
moves, 395

Both beauteous shades, both hapless in their loves;
And near them walk'd with solemn pace and slow,
Sad Ariadne, partner of their woe;

The royal Minos Ariadne bred,
She Theseus lov'd; from Crete with Theseus fled;
Swift to the Dian isle the hero flies, 401

And tow'rs his Athens bears the lovely prize;
There Bacchus with fierce rage Diana fires,
The goddess aims her shaft, the nymph expires.

There Clymenè, and Mera I behold; 405
There Eriphylè weeps, who loosely sold
Her lord, her honour, for the lust of gold.

But should I all recount, the night would fail,
Unequal to the melancholy tale;
And all-composing rest my nature craves, 410
Here in the court, or yonder on the waves:

In you I trust, and in the heav'nly pow'rs,
To land Ulysses on his native shores.

He ceas'd; but left so charming on their ear
His voice, that list'ning still they seem'd to hear.

Till rising up, Aretè silence broke,

Stretch'd out her snowy hand, and thus she spoke:

What wond'rous man heav'n sends us in our
guest!

Through all his woes the hero shines confest;

His comely port, his ample frame express 420

A manly air, majestic in distress.

He, as my guest, is my peculiar care;

You share the pleasure,—then in bounty share;

To worth in misery, a rev'rence pay,

And with a gen'rous hand reward his stay; 425

For since kind heav'n with wealth our realm has
bless'd,

Give it to heav'n, by aiding ~~the~~ distress'd.

Then sage Echeneus, whose grave, rev'rend
brow

The hand of time had silver'd o'er with snow,

Mature in wisdom rose: Your words, he cries,

Demand obedience, for your words are wise.

But let our king direct the glorious way

To gen'rous acts; our part is to obey.

While life informs these limbs, (the king re-
ply'd)

Well to deserve, be all my cares employ'd: 435

But here this night the royal guest detain,
 Till the sun flames along th' ethereal plain :
 Be it my task to send with ample stores
 The stranger from our hospitable shores :
 Tread you my steps ! 'Tis mine to lead the race,
 The first in glory, as the first in place. 441 —

To whom the prince : This night with joy I stay,
 O monarch great in virtue as in sway !
 If thou the circling year my stay controul,
 To raise a bounty noble as thy soul ; 445
 The circling year I wait, with ampler stores
 And fiercer pomp to hail my native shores :
 Then by my realms due homage would be paid ;
 For wealthy kings are loyally obey'd ! 449

O king ! for such thou art, and sure thy blood
 Through veins (he cry'd) of royal fathers flow'd ;
 Unlike those vagrants who on falsehood live,
 Skill'd in smooth tales, and artful to deceive ;
 Thy better soul abhors the liar's part,
 Wise is thy voice, and noble is thy heart. 455
 Thy words like music ev'ry breast controul,
 Steal through the ear, and win upon the soul ;
 Soft, as some song divine, thy story flows,
 Nor better could the muse record thy woes.

But say, upon the dark and dismal coast 460
 Saw'st thou the worthies of the Grecian host;
 The godlike leaders who, in battle slain,
 Fell before Troy, and nobly press'd the plain?

And lo! a length of night behind remains, 464

The ev'ning stars still mount th' ethereal plains.

Thy tale with raptures I could hear thee tell,

Thy woes on earth, the wond'rous scenes in hell,

Till in the vault of heav'n the stars decay,

And the sky reddens with the rising day.

O worthy of the pow'r the gods assign'd, 470

(Ulysses thus replies) a king in mind!

Since yet the early hour of night allows

Time for discourse, and time for soft repose,

If scenes of misery can entertain,

Woes I unfold, of woes a dismal train. 475

Prepare to hear of murder and of blood;

Of godlike heroes who uninjur'd stood

Amidst a war of spears in foreign lands,

Yet bled at home, and bled by female hands.

Now summon'd Proserpine to hell's black hall

The heroine shades; they vanish'd at her call. 481

When lo! advanc'd the forms of heroes slain

By stern Egysthus, a majestic train,

And high above the rest, Atrides press'd the plain.

He quaff'd the gore; and straight his soldier knew,
 And from his eyes pour'd down the tender dew;
 His arms he stretch'd; his arms the touch deceive,
 Nor in the fond embrace, embraces give:
 His substance vanish'd, and his strength decay'd,
 Now all Atrides is an empty shade. 490

Mov'd at the sight, for a space resign'd
 To soft affliction all my manly mind;
 At last with tears—Oh what relentless doom,
 Imperial phantom, bow'd thee to the tomb?
 Say, while the sea, and while the tempest raves,
 Has fate oppress'd thee in the roaring waves,
 Or nobly seiz'd thee in the dire alarms.
 Of war and slaughter, and the clash of arms?

The ghost returns: O chief of humankind
 For active courage and a patient mind; 500
 Nor while the sea, nor while the tempest raves,
 Has fate oppress'd me on the roaring waves;
 Nor nobly seiz'd me in the dire alarms
 Of war and slaughter, and the clash of arms.
 Stabb'd by a murd'rous hand Atrides died, 505
 A foul adult'rer, and a faithless bride;
 E'en in my mirth and at the friendly feast,
 O'er the full bowl, the traitor stabb'd his guest

Thus by the gory arm of slaughter falls
 The stately ox, and bleeds within the stalls. 510
 But not with me the direful murder ends,
 These, these expir'd! their crime, they were my
 friends:

Thick as the boars, which some luxurious lord
 Kills for the feast, to crown the nuptial board.
 When war has thunder'd with its loudest storms,
 Death thou hast seen in all her ghastly forms;
 In duel met her on the listed ground,
 When hand to hand they wound return for wound;
 But never have thy eyes astonish'd view'd
 So vile a deed, so dire a scene of blood. 520
 E'en in the flow of joy, when now the bowl
 Glows in our veins, and opens ev'ry soul,
 We groan, we faint; with blood the dome is dy'd,
 And o'er the pavement floats the dreadful tide—
 Her breast all gore, with lamentable cries, 525
 The bleeding innocent Cassandra dies!
 Then though pale death froze cold in ev'ry vein,
 My sword I strive to wield, but strive in vain;
 Nor did my trait'ress wife these eye-lids close,
 Or decently in death my limbs compose. 530
 O woman, woman, when to ill thy mind
 Is bent, all hell contains no fouler fiend:

And such was mine! who basely plung'd her sword
Through the fond bosom where she reign'd ador'd!

Alas! I hop'd, the toils of war o'ercome, 535

To meet soft quiet and repose at home:

Delusive hope! O wife, thy deeds disgrace

The perjur'd sex, and blacken all the race;

And should posterity one virtuous find,

Name Clytemnestra, they will curse the kind. 540

O injur'd shade, I cry'd, what mighty woes
To thy imperial race from woman rose!

By woman here thou tread'st this mournful strand,

And Greece by woman lies a desert land.

Warn'd by my ills beware, the shade replies,
Nor trust the sex that is so rarely wise; 546

When earnest to explore thy secret breast,

Unfold some trifle, but conceal the rest:

But in thy consort cease to fear a foe,

For thee she feels sincerity of woe: 550

When Troy first bled beneath the Grecian arms

She shone unrivall'd with a blaze of charms,

Thy infant son, her fragrant bosom prest,

Hung at her knee, or wanton'd at her breast;

But now the years a num'rous train have ran; 555

The blooming boy is ripen'd into man;

Thy eyes shall see him burn with noble fire,
 The sire shall bless his son, the son his sire:
 But my Orestes never met these eyes,
 Without one look the murder'd father dies; 560
 Then from a wretched friend this wisdom learn,
 E'en to thy queen disguis'd, unknown, return;
 For since of womankind so few are just,
 Think all are false, nor e'en the faithful trust.

But say, resides my son in royal port, 565
 In rich Orchomenos, or Sparta's court?
 Or say, in Pyle? for yet he views the light,
 Nor glides a phantom through the realms of night.

Then I: Thy suit is vain, nor can I say
 If yet he breathes in realms of cheerful day; 570
 Or pale or wan beholds these nether skies:
 Truth I revere; for wisdom never lies.

Thus in a tide of tears our sorrows flow,
 And adds new horror to the realms of woe;
 Till side by side along the dreary coast 575
 Advanc'd Achilles' and Patroclus' ghost,
 A friendly pair! near these the Pylian stray'd,
 And tow'ring Ajax, an illustrious shade!
 War was his joy, and pleas'd with loud alarms,
 None but Pelides brighter shone in arms. 580

Through the thick gloom his friend Achilles
knew,

And as he speaks the tears descend in dew:

Com'st thou alive to view the Stygian bounds,
Where the wan spectres walk eternal rounds;
Nor fear'st the dark and dismal waste to tread,
Throng'd with pale ghosts, familiar with the dead?

To whom with sighs: I pass these dreadful gates
To seek the Theban, and consult the fates:

For still distress'd I rove from coast to coast,
Lost to my friends, and to my country lost. 590

But sure the eye of time beholds no name
So blest as thine in all the rolls of fame;

Alive we hail'd thee with our guardian gods,
And dead, thou rul'st a king in these abodes.

Talk not of ruling in this dol'rous gloom, 595
Nor think vain words (he cry'd) can ease my doom.

Rather I choose laboriously to bear

A weight of woes, and breathe the vital air,

A slave to some poor hind that toils for bread,

Than reign the sceptred monarch of the dead.

But say, if in my steps my son proceeds,

And emulates his godlike father's deeds?

If at the clash of arms, and shout of foes,

Swells his bold heart, his bosom nobly glows?

Say if my sire, the rev'rend Peleus, reigns 605

Great in his Pthia, and his throne maintains;

Or weak and old, my youthful arm demands,

To fix the sceptre stedfast in his hands?

O might the lamp of life rekindled burn,

And death release me from the silent urn! 610

This arm that thunder'd o'er the Phrygian plain,

And swell'd the ground with mountains of the
slain,

Should vindicate my injur'd father's fame,

Crush the proud rebel, and assert his claim.

Illustrious shade (I cry'd), of Peleus' fates 615

No circumstance the voice of fame relates:

But hear with pleas'd attention the renown,

The wars and wisdom of thy gallant son:

With me from Scyros to the field of fame

Radiant in arms the blooming hero came. 620

When Greece assembled all her hundred states

To ripen counsels, and decide debates;

Heav'ns! how he charm'd us with a flow of sense,

And won the heart with manly eloquence!

He first was seen of all the peers to rise, 625

The third in wisdom, where they all were wise;

But when to try the fortune of the day,

Host mov'd tow'rd host in terrible array,

Before the van, impatient for the fight,
 With martial port he strode, and stern delight;
 Heaps strew'd on heaps beneath his falchion
 groan'd,

And monuments of dead deform'd the ground.

The time would fail should I in order tell

What foes were vanquish'd, and what numbers
 fell:

How, lost through love, Eurypylus was slain, 635

And round him bled his bold Cetaean train.

To Troy no hero came of nobler line,

Or if of nobler, Memnon, it was thine.

When Ilion in the horse receiv'd her doom,

And unseen armies ambush'd in its womb; 640

Greece gave her latent warriors to my care,

'Twas mine on Troy to pour th' imprison'd war:

Then when the boldest bosom beat with fear,

When the stern eyes of heroes dropp'd a tear;

Fierce in his look his ardent valour glow'd, 645

Flush'd in his cheek, or sally'd in his blood;

Indignant in the dark recess he stands,

Pants for the battle, and the war demands;

His voice breath'd death, and with a martial air

He grasp'd his sword, and shook his glitt'ring spear.

And when the gods our arms with conquest crown'd,
 When Troy's proud bulwarks smok'd upon the
 ground,

Greece to reward her soldier's gallant toils
 Heap'd high his navy with unnumber'd spoils.

Thus great in glory, from the din of war 655
 Safe he return'd, without one hostile scar;
 Though spears in iron tempests rain'd around,
 Yet innocent they play'd, and guiltless of a wound.

While yet I spoke, the shade with transport
 glow'd,

Rose in his majesty, and nobler trod; 660
 With haughty stalk he sought the distant glades
 Of warrior-kings, and join'd th' illustrious shades.

Now without number ghost by ghost arose,
 All wailing with unutterable woes.

Alone, apart, in discontented mood, 665

A gloomy shade, the sullen Ajax stood;

For ever sad with proud disdain he pin'd,

And the lost arms for ever stung his mind;

Though to the contest Thetis gave the laws,

And Pallas, by the Trojans, judg'd the cause. 670

Oh why was I victorious in the strife;

O dear-bought honour with so brave a life!

With him the strength of war, the soldiers' pride,
Our second hope to great Achilles died!

Touch'd at the sight from tears I scarce refrain,
And tender sorrow thrills in ev'ry vein; 676

Pensive and sad I stand, at length accost

With accents mild th' inexorable ghost:

Still burns thy rage? and can brave souls re-
sent 679

E'en after death? Relent, great shade, relent!

Perish those arms which by the gods' decree

Accurs'd our army with the loss of thee!

With thee we fell; Greece wept thy hapless fates;

And shook astonish'd through her hundred states;

Not more, when great Achilles press'd the ground,

And breath'd his manly spirit through the wound.

O deem thy fall not ow'd to man's decree,

Jove hated Greece, and punish'd Greece in thee!

Turn then, O, peaceful turn, thy wrath controul,

And calm the raging tempest of thy soul. 690

While yet I speak, the shade disdains to stay,
In silence turns, and sullen stalks away.

Touch'd at his sour retreat, through deepest
night,

Through hell's black bounds I had pursu'd his flight,

And forc'd the stubborn spectre to reply; 695

But wond'rous visions drew my curious eye.

High on a throne, tremendous to behold,

Stern Minos waves a mace of burnish'd gold;

Around ten thousand thousand spectres stand

Through the wide dome of Dis, a trembling band.

Still as they plead, the fatal lots he rolls, 701

Absolves the just, and dooms the guilty souls.

There huge Orion of portentous size,

Swift through the gloom a giant-hunter flies;

A pond'rous mace of brass with direful sway 705

Aloft he whirls, to crush the savage prey;

Stern beasts in trains that by his truncheon fell,

Now grisly forms, shoot o'er the lawns of hell.

There Tityus large and long, in fetters bound,

O'erspreads nine acres of infernal ground; 710

Two rav'nous vultures, furious for their food,

Scream o'er the fiend, and riot in his blood,

Incessant gore the liver in his breast,

Th' immortal liver grows, and gives th' immortal

feast:

For as o'er Panopé's enamell'd plains 715

Latona journey'd to the Pythian fanes,

With haughty love th' audacious monster strove

To force the goddess, and to rival Jove.

There Tantalus along the Stygian bounds
 Pours out deep groans; (with groans all hell re-
 sounds) 720

E'en in the circling floods refreshment craves,
 And pines with thirst amidst a sea of waves:

When to the water he his lip applies,

Back from his lip the treach'rous water flies.

Above, beneath, around his hapless head, 725

Trees of all kinds delicious fruitage spread;

There figs sky-dy'd, a purple hue disclose,

Green looks the olive, the pomegranate glows,

There dangling pears exalted scents unfold,

And yellow apples ripen into gold; 730

The fruit he strives to seize: but blasts arise,

Toss it on high, and whirl it to the skies.

I turn'd my eye, and as I turn'd survey'd

A mournful vision! the Sisyphean shade;

With many a weary step, and many a groan, 735

Up the high hill he heaves a huge round stone;

The huge round stone, resulting with a bound,

Thunders impetuous down, and smokes along the
 ground.

Again the restless orb his toil renews,

Dust mounts in clouds, and sweat descends in dews.

Now I the strength of Hercules behold, 741
 A tow'ring spectre of gigantic mould,
 A shadowy form! for high in heav'n's abodes
 Himself resides, a god among the gods;
 There in the bright assemblies of the skies, 745
 He nectar quaffs, and Hebe crowns his joys.
 Here hov'ring ghosts, like fowl, his shade sur-
 round,
 And clang their pinions with terrific sound;
 Gloomy as night he stands, in act to throw
 Th' aërial arrow from the twanging bow. 750
 Around his breast a wond'rous zone is roll'd,
 Where woodland monsters grin in fretted gold:
 There sullen lions sternly seem to roar,
 The bear to growl, to foam the tusky boar;
 There war and havoc and destruction stood, 755
 And vengeful murder red with human blood.
 Thus terribly adorn'd the figures shine,
 Inimitably wrought with skill divine.
 The mighty ghost advanc'd with awful look,
 And turning his grim visage, sternly spoke: 760
 O exercis'd in grief! by arts refin'd!
 O taught to bear the wrongs of base mankind!
 Such, such was I! still tost from care to care,
 While in your world I drew the vital air!

E'en I who from the Lord of thunders rose, 765
 Bole toils and dangers, and a weight of woes;
 To a base monarch still a slave confin'd,
 (The hardest bondage to a gen'rous mind!)
 Down to these worlds I trod the dismal way,
 And dragg'd the three-mouth'd dog to upper day;
 E'en hell I conquer'd, through the friendly aid
 Of Maia's offspring and the martial maid.

Thus he, nor deign'd for our reply to stay,
 But turning stalk'd with giant-strides away.

Curious to view the kings of ancient days, 775
 The mighty dead that live in endless praise,
 Resolv'd I stand; and haply had survey'd
 The godlike Theseus, and Pirithous' shade;
 But swarms of spectres rose from deepest hell,
 With bloodless visage, and with hideous yell, 780
 They scream, they shriek; sad groans and dismal
 sounds

Stun my scar'd ears, and pierce hell's utmost
 bounds.

No more my heart the dismal din sustains,
 And my cold blood hangs shiv'ring in my veins;
 Lest gorgon rising from th' infernal lakes, 785
 With horrors arm'd, and curls of hissing snakes,

Should fix me, stiffen'd at the monstrous sight,

A stony image, in eternal night!

Straight from the direful coast to purer air

I speed my flight, and to my mates repair: 790

My mates ascend the ship; they strike their oars;

The mountains lessen, and retreat the shores;

Swift o'er the waves we fly; the fresh'ning gales

Sing through the shrouds, and stretch the swelling
sails.

SELECT NOTES .

TO

BOOK XI.

The ancients call this book *Νεκρομαντεία*, or *Nekua*, the book of Necromancy; because (says Eustathius) it contains an interview between Ulysses and the shades of the dead.

Virgil has not only borrowed the general design from Homer, but imitated many particular incidents. L'Abbé Fraguier, in the *Memoirs of literature*, gives his judgment in favour of the Roman poet, and justly observes, that the end and design of the journey is more important in Virgil than in Homer. Ulysses descends to consult Tiresias, Æneas his father. Ulysses takes a review of the shades of celebrated persons that preceded his times, or whom he knew at Troy, who have no relation to the story of the Odyssey: Æneas receives the history of his own posterity; his father instructs him how to manage the Italian war, and how to conclude it with honour; that is, to lay the foundations of the greatest empire in the world; and the poet, by a very happy address, takes an opportunity to pay a noble compliment to his patron Augustus. In the *Æneid* there is a magnificent description of the descent and entrance into hell; and the diseases, cares, and terrors that Æneas sees in his journey, are very happily imagined, as an introduction into the regions of death: whereas in Homer there is nothing so noble, we scarce are able to discover the place where the poet lays his scene, or whether Ulysses continues below or above the ground. Instead of a descent into hell, it seems rather a conjuring up, or an evocation of the dead from hell; according to the words of Horace, who undoubtedly had this passage of Homer in his thoughts. *Satire viii. lib. 1.*

‘ . . . Scalpere terram .

Unguibus, et pullam divellere mordicus agnam

Cœperunt; cruor in fossam confusus, ut inde

Manes *elicerent*, animas responsa daturas.’

But if it be understood of an evocation only, how shall we account for several visions and descriptions in the conclusion of this book? Ulysses sees Tantalus in the waters of hell, and Sisyphus rolling a stone up an infernal mountain; these Ulysses could not conjure up, and consequently must be supposed to have entered at least the borders of those infernal regions. In short, Fraguier is of opinion, that Virgil profited more by the *Frogs* of Aristophanes than by Homer: and Mr. Dryden prefers the sixth book of the *Æneid* to the eleventh of the *Odyssey*, I think with very great reason.

I will take this opportunity briefly to mention the original of all these fictions of infernal rivers, judges, &c. spoken of by Homer, and repeated and enlarged by Virgil. They are of Egyptian extract, as Mr. Sandys (that faithful traveller, and judicious poet) observes, speaking of the mummies of Memphis, p. 134.

‘These ceremonies performed, they laid the corpse in a boat to be wafted over Acherusia, a lake on the south of Memphis, by one person only, whom they called Charon; which gave Orpheus the invention of his infernal ferryman; an ill-favoured slovenly fellow, as Virgil describes him, *Æneid* vi. About this lake stood the shady temple of Hecate, with the ports of Cocytus and Oblivion, separated by bars of brass, the original of like fables. When landed on the other side, the bodies were brought before certain judges: if convicted of an evil life, they were deprived of burial; if otherwise, they were suffered to be interred.’ This explication shews the foundation of those ancient fables of Charon, Rhadamanthus, &c. and also that the poets had a regard to truth in their inventions, and grounded even their fables upon some remarkable customs, which grew obscure and absurd only because the memory of the customs to which they allude is lost to posterity.

I will only add from Dacier, that this book is an evidence of the antiquity of the opinion of the soul’s immortality. It is upon this that the most ancient of all divinations was founded, I mean that which was performed by the evocation of the dead. There is a very remarkable instance of this in the holy Scriptures, in an age not very distant from that of Homer. Saul consults one of these infernal agents to call up Samuel, who appears, or some evil

spirit in his form, and predicts his impending death and calamities. This is a pregnant instance of the antiquity of necromancy, and that it was not of Homer's invention; it prevailed long before his days among the Chaldeans, and spread over all the oriental world. Æschylus has a tragedy intitled *Persæ*, in which the shade of Darius is called up, like that of Samuel, and foretels queen Atossa all her misfortunes. Thus it appears that there was a foundation for what Homer writes; he only embellishes the opinions of antiquity with the ornaments of poetry.

I must confess that Homer gives a miserable account of a future state; there is not a person described in happiness, unless perhaps it be Tiresias; the good and the bad seem all in the same condition: whereas Virgil has an Hell for the wicked, and an Elysium for the just. Though perhaps it may be a vindication of Homer to say, that the notions of Virgil of a future state were different from those of Homer; according to whom hell might only be a receptacle for the vehicles of the dead, and that while they were in hell, their *φῆμα* or spirit might be in heaven, as appears from what is said of the *αἰδωλον* of Hercules in this xith book of the *Odyssey*.

V. 15. *There in a lonely land, and gloomy cells,
The dusky nation of Cimmeria dwells.]*

It is the opinion of many commentators, that Homer constantly in these voyages of Ulysses makes use of a fabulous geography; but perhaps the contrary opinion in many places may be true: in this passage, Ulysses in the space of one day sails from the island of Circe to the Cimmerians: now it is very evident from Herodotus and Strabo, that they inhabited the regions near the Bosphorus, and consequently Ulysses could not sail thither in the compass of a day; and therefore, says Strabo, the poet removes not only the Cimmerians, but their climate and darkness, from the northern Bosphorus into Calapania in Italy.

But that there really were a people in Italy named Cimmerians is evident from the testimony of many authors. So Lycophron plainly understands this passage, and relates these adventures as performed in Italy. He recapitulates all the voyages of Ulysses,

and mentioning the descent into hell, and the Cimmerians, he immediately describes the infernal rivers, and adds (speaking of the Apennine),

Εξ ου τα πάντα χυτλα, και πασαι μυχων
Πηλαι, κατ' Αυσονιτιν ελκονται χθονα.

That is, 'From whence all the rivers, and all the fountains flow through the regions of Italy.' And these lines of Tibullus,

'Cimmerion etiam obscuras accessit ad arces,
Queis nunquam candente dies apparuit ortu,
Sive supra terras Phœbus, seu curreret infra.'

are understood by all interpreters to denote the Italian Cimmerians, who dwelt near Baiæ and the lake Avernus; and therefore Homer may be imagined not entirely to follow a fabulous geography. It is evident from Herodotus that these Cimmerians were anciently a powerful nation; for passing into Asia (says that author in his Clio) they possessed themselves of Sardis, in the time of Ardyes, the son of Gyges. If so, it is possible they might make several settlements in different parts of the world, and call those settlements by their original name, Cimmerians, and consequently there might be Italian, as well as Scythian Cimmerians.

It must be allowed, that this horrid region is well chosen for the descent into hell: it is described as a land of obscurity and horrors, and happily imagined to introduce a relation concerning the realms of death and darkness.

V. 31. *New wine, with honey-temper'd milk.*] The word in the original is, *μελικρατον*, which (as Eustathius observes) the ancients constantly understood to imply a mixture of honey and milk; but all writers who succeeded Homer as constantly used it to signify a composition of water mixed with honey. The Latin poets have borrowed their magical rites from Homer. This libation is made to all the departed shades; but to what purpose (objects Eustathius) should these rites be paid to the dead, when it is evident from the subsequent relation that they were ignorant of these ceremonies till they had tasted the libation? He answers from the ancients, that they were merely honorary to

the regents of the dead, Pluto and Proserpina; and used to obtain their leave to have an interview with the shades in their dominions.

V. 47. *When lo! appear'd along the dusky coasts,
Thin, airy shoals of visionary ghosts.]*

We are informed by Eustathius, that the ancients rejected these six verses, for, say they, these are not the shades of persons newly slain, but who have long been in these infernal regions: how then can their wounds be supposed still to be visible, especially through their armour, when the soul was separated from the body? Neither is this the proper place for their appearance, for the poet immediately subjoins, that the ghost of Elpenor was the first that he encountered in these regions of darkness. But these objections will be easily answered, by having recourse to the notions which the ancients entertained concerning the dead: we must remember that they imagined that the soul though freed from the body had still a vehicle, exactly resembling the body; as the figure in a mould retains the resemblance of the mould, when separated from it; the body is but as a case to this vehicle, and it is in this vehicle that the wounds are said to be visible; this was supposed to be less gross than the mortal body, and less subtile than the soul; so that whatever wounds the outward body received when living, were believed to affect this inward substance, and consequently might be visible after separation.

It is true that the poet calls the ghost of Elpenor the first ghost, but this means the first whom he knew: Elpenor was not yet buried, and therefore was not yet received into the habitation of the dead, but wanders before the entrance of it. This is the reason why his shade is said to present itself the foremost: it comes not up from the realm of death, but descends towards it from the upper world.

But these shades of the warriors are said still to wear their armour in which they were slain, for the poet adds that it was stained with blood: how is it possible for these ghosts, which are only a subtile substance, not a gross body, to wear the armour they wore in the other world? How was it conveyed to them in

these infernal regions? All that occurs to me in answer to this objection is, that the poet describes them suitably to the characters they bore in life; the warriors on earth are warriors in hell; and that he adds these circumstances only to denote the manner of their death, which was in battle, or by the sword. No doubt but Homer represents a future state according to the notions which his age entertained of it, and this sufficiently justifies him as a poet, who is not obliged to write truths, but according to fame and common opinions.

But to prove these verses genuine, we have the authority of Virgil: he was too sensible of their beauty not to adorn his poems with them. Georg. iv. 470.

‘At cantu commotæ Erebi de sedibus imis
Umbræ ibant tenues, simulacraque luce carentum;
Matres, atque viri, defunctaque corpora vitæ
Magnanimûm heroum, pueri, innuptæque puellæ,
Impositique rogis juvenes,’ &c.

It must be confessed that the Roman poet omits the circumstance of the armour in his translation, as being perhaps contrary to the opinions prevailing in his age; but in the sixth book he describes his heroes with arms, horses, and infernal chariots; and in the story of Deiphobus, we see his shade retain the wounds in hell, which he received at the time of his death in Troy,

‘... Lacerum crudelitur ora
Deiphobum vidi,’ &c.

V. 73. *How could thy soul, by realms and seas disjoin’d,
Outfly the nimble sail?*

Eustathius is of opinion, that Ulysses speaks pleasantly to Elpenor, for were his words to be literally translated they would be, ‘Elpenor, thou art come hither on foot, sooner than I in a ship.’ I suppose it is the worthless character of Elpenor that led that critic into this opinion; but I should rather take the sentence to be spoken seriously, not only because such railleries are an insult upon the unfortunate, and levities perhaps unworthy of epic poetry, but also from the general conduct of Ulysses, who at the

sight of Elpenor bursts into tears, and compassionates the fate of his friend. Is there any thing in this that looks like raillery? If there be, we must confess that Ulysses makes a very quick transition from sorrow to pleasantry. The other is a more noble sense, and therefore I have followed it, and it excellently paints the surprise of Ulysses at the unexpected sight of Elpenor, and expresses his wonder that the soul, the moment it leaves the body, should reach the receptacle of departed shades.

V. 105. *All pale ascends my royal mother's shade*] The behaviour of Ulysses with respect to his mother may appear not sufficiently tender and affectionate; he refrains all manner of address to her, a conduct which may be censured as inconsistent with filial piety; but Plutarch very fully answers this objection. 'It is (says that author) a remarkable instance of the prudence of Ulysses, who descending into the regions of the dead, refused all conference even with his mother, till he had obtained an answer from Tiresias, concerning the business which induced him to undertake that infernal journey.' A wise man is not inquisitive about things impertinent; accordingly Ulysses first shews himself a wise man, and then a dutiful son. Besides, it is very judicious in Homer thus to describe Ulysses: the whole design of the Odyssey is the return of Ulysses to his country; this is the mark at which the hero should continually aim, and therefore it is necessary that all other incidents should be subordinate to this; and the poet had been blameable if he had shewed Ulysses entertaining himself with amusements, and postponing the consideration of the chief design of the Odyssey. Lucian speaks to the same purpose in his piece upon astrology.

V. 120. *But sheathe thy poniard . . .*] The terror which the shades of the departed express at the sight of the sword of Ulysses has been frequently censured as absurd and ridiculous: 'Risum cui non moveat,' says Scaliger, 'cum ensem ait et vulnera metuisse?' 'What have the dead to fear from a sword, who are beyond the power of it, by being reduced to an incorporeal shadow?' But this description is consistent with the notions of the ancients concerning the dead. I have already remarked, that the shades retained a vehicle, which resembled the body, and was

liable to pain as well as the corporeal substance; if not, to what purpose are the Furies described with iron scourges, or the vulture tearing the liver of Tityus?

Virgil ascribes the like fears to the shades in the *Æneis*; for the Sibyl thus commands Æneas:

‘Tuquē invade viam, virginēque eripere ferrum.’

And the shades of the Greeks are there said to fly at the sight of his arms,

‘At Danaūm proceres, Agamemnoniæque Phalanges
Ut vidēre virum, fulgentiæque arma per umbras
Ingenti trepidare metu.’

Tiresias is here described consistently with the character before given him by the poet, I mean with a pre-eminence above the other shades; for (as Eustathius observes) he knows Ulysses before he tastes the ingredients; a privilege not claimed by any other of the infernal inhabitants. Elpenor indeed did the same, but for another reason; because he was not yet buried, nor entered the regions of the dead, and therefore his soul was yet entire.

V. 145. *Ulysses at his country scarce arrives!*] The poet conducts this review with admirable judgment. The whole design of Ulysses is to engage the Phæacians in his favour, in order to his transportation to his own country: how does he bring this about? By shewing that it was decreed by the gods that he should be conducted thither by strangers; so that the Phæacians immediately conclude, that they are the people destined by heaven to conduct him home; to give this the greater weight, he puts the speech into the mouth of the prophet Tiresias, and exalts his character in an extraordinary manner, to strengthen the credit of the prediction: by this method likewise the poet interweaves his episode into the texture and essence of the poem; he makes this journey into hell contribute to the restoration of his hero, and unites the subordinate parts very happily with the main action.

V. 152. *That done, a people far from sea explore,
Whome'er knew salt. . . .]*

It is certain that Tiresias speaks very obscurely, after the manner

of the oracles; but the ancients generally understood this people to be the Epirots. Thus Pausanias in his Attics: *Οἱ μὲν αὖτε αἰῶνος ἰλίῃ θάλασσαν, μὲν δὲ αἰῶνι ἠπισταίῳ χρῆσθαι, μαρτυρεῖ δὲ μοι καὶ Ὅμηρος ἐπὶ ἐν Ὀδυσσεΐα.*

... *Οἱ οὐκ ἴσασι θάλασσαν*

That is; 'The Epirots, even so lately as after the taking of Troy, were ignorant of the sea, and the use of salt, as Homer testifies in his Odyssey:

'Who ne'er knew salt, or heard the billows roar.'

So that they who were ignorant of the sea, were likewise ignorant of the use of salt, according to Homer: whence it may be conjectured, that the poet knew of no salt but what was made of seawater. The other token of their ignorance of the sea was, that they should not know an oar, but call it a corn-van. This verse was once sarcastically applied to Philip of Macedon by Amerdion, a Grecian, who flying from him, and being apprehended, was asked whither he fled? He bravely answered, to find a people who knew not Philip.

Εἰσοκε τῆς ἀφικῶμαι, οἱ οὐκ ἴσασι Φιλίππον.

I persuade myself that this passage is rightly translated; *Νῆας φοινικοπαρῆες*, and *τα τε πῆλα πύρσι πτελοῖται*

'A painted wonder, flying on the main,'

for the wings of the ship signify the sails (as Eustathius remarks), and not the oars, as we might be misled to conclude from the immediate connexion with *ῥεῖσμα*, or oars. The poet, I believe, intended to express the wonder of a person upon his first sight of a ship, who observing it to move swiftly along the seas, might mistake the sails for wings, according to that beautiful description of Mr. Dryden upon a like occasion in his Indian Emperor:

'The objects I could first distinctly view,
Were tall straight trees which on the waters flew;
Wings on their sides instead of leaves did grow,
Which gather'd all the breath the winds could blow;
And at their roots grew floating palaces,' &c.

Eustathius tells us the reason of this command given to Ulysses, to search out a people ignorant of the sea: it was in honour of Neptune, to make his name regarded by a nation which was entirely a stranger to that deity; and this injunction was laid by way of atonement for the violence offered to his son Polyphemus.

Many critics have imagined that this passage is corrupted; but, as Eustathius observes, we have the authority of Sophocles to prove it genuine, who alluding to this passage, writes,

Ωμοις ἀθηροβροῖον ὄργανον φέρων.

V. 167. *When late stern Neptune points the shaft with death.*] The death of Ulysses is related variously, but the following account is chiefly credited: Ulysses had a son by Circe named Telegonus, who being grown to years of maturity, sailed to Ithaca in search of his father; where seizing some sheep for the use of his attendants, the shepherds put themselves into a posture to rescue them; Ulysses being advertised of it, went with his son Telemachus to repel Telegonus, who in defending himself wounded Ulysses, not knowing him to be his father. Thus Oppian, Hyginus, and Dictys relate the story. Many poets have brought this upon the stage, and Aristotle criticizing upon one of these tragedies gives us the title of it, which was, 'Ulysses Wounded.' But if Ulysses thus died, how can Neptune be said to 'point the shaft with death?' We are informed that the spear with which Telegonus gave the wound, was pointed with the bone of a sea turtle; so that literally his death came from the sea, or ἐξ αἰός: and Neptune being the god of the ocean, his death may without violence be ascribed to that deity. It is true, some critics read ἐξ αἰός as one word, and then it will signify that Ulysses should escape the dangers of the sea, and die upon the continent far from it; but the former sense is most consonant to the tenor of the poem, through which Neptune is constantly represented as an enemy to Ulysses.

I will only add the reason why Ulysses is enjoined to offer a bull, a ram, and a boar to Neptune: the bull represents the roaring of the sea in storms; the ram the milder appearance of it when in tranquillity: the boar was used by the ancients as an emblem of

fecundity, to represent the fruitfulness of the ocean. This particular sacrifice of three animals was called *τρίθυσια*. EUSTATHIUS.

V. 195. *There the wide sea with all his billows raves.*] If this passage were literally translated, it would run thus: 'My son, how didst thou arrive at this place of darkness, when so many rivers, and the ocean lie in the midway?' This (says Eustathius) plainly shews that Homer uses a fabulous geography; for whereas the places that are mentioned in these voyages of Ulysses are really situated upon the Mediterranean, Anticlea here says that they lie in the middle of the ocean. But this is undoubtedly an error: the whole of the observation depends upon the word *μεσση*; but why must this denote the midway so exactly? Is it not sufficient to say, that between Ithaca and this infernal region, rivers and the ocean roll? And that this is the real meaning is evident from this book; for Ulysses sails in the space of one day from the island of Circe to the place where he descends: how then could these places where Ulysses touches in his voyage lie in the middle of the ocean, unless we can suppose he passed half the ocean in one day? The poet directly affirms, that he descends at the extremity of it; but this extremity is no more than one day's voyage from the island of Circe, and consequently that island could not lie in the middle of the ocean: therefore this place is no evidence that Homer uses a fabulous geography.

Eustathius very justly observes, that Homer judiciously places the descent into hell at the extremity of the ocean; for it is natural to imagine that to be the only passage to it, by which the sun and the stars themselves appear to descend, and sink into the realms of darkness.

V. 224. *And shares the banquet in superior state, &c.*] This passage is fully explained by Eustathius: he tells us, that it was an ancient custom to invite kings and legislators to all public feasts; this was to do them honour: and the chief seat was always reserved for the chief magistrate. Without this observation the lines are unintelligible. It is evident that the words are not spoken of sacrifices or feasts made to the gods, but social entertainments, for they are general, *πάντες καλεῖσσι*, 'all the people of the realm invite Telemachus to their feasts.' And this seems to have been

a right due to the chief magistrate, for ἀλγυνειν implies it, which word Eustathius explains by ἐν λόγῳ ποιεῖσθαι; 'such an honour as ought not to be neglected,' or

'Grac'd with such honours as become the great.'

It gives a very happy image of those ages of the world, when we observe such an intercourse between the king and the subject: the idea of power carries no terror in it, but the ruler himself makes a part of the public joy.

V. 256. *A bliss to weep within her arms*] This is almost a literal translation; the words in the Greek are, τελεθ' ἡμεῖς δὲ γοοῖο, or 'that we may delight ourselves with sorrow,' which Eustathius explains by saying, 'there is a pleasure in weeping.' I should rather understand the words to signify, that in the instant while he is rejoicing at the sight of his mother, he is compelled to turn his joy into tears, to find the whole scene a delusion.

V. 281. *Tyro whom great Salmoneus bred.*] Virgil gives a very different character of Salmoneus from this of Homer: he describes him as an impious person who presumed to imitate the thunder of Jupiter, whereas Homer styles him blameless, or ἀμύμων; an argument, says Eustathius, that the preceding story is a fable invented since the days of Homer. This may perhaps be true, and we may naturally conclude it to be true from his silence of it, but not from the epithet ἀμύμων; for in the first book of the Odyssey, Jupiter gives the same appellation to Ægisthus, even while he condemns him of murder and adultery. Eustathius adds, that Salmoneus was a great proficient in mechanics, and inventor of a vessel called βρονταῖον, which imitated thunder by rolling stones in it, which gave occasion to the fictions of the poets.

V. 283. *For fair Enipeus, as from fruitful urns*

He pours his wat'ry store, the virgin burns.]

There are no fables in the poets that seem more bold than these concerning the commerce between women and river-gods; but Eustathius gives us a probable solution: I will translate him literally. It was customary for young virgins to resort frequently to rivers to bathe in them; and the ancients have very well explained

these fables about the intercourse between them and the water-gods: 'Receive my virginity, O Scamander,' says a lady; but it is very apparent who this Scamander was: her lover Cimon lay concealed in the reed. This was a good excuse for female frailty, in ages of credulity; for such imaginary intercourse between the fair sex and deities was not only believed, but esteemed honourable. No doubt the ladies were frequently deceived; their lovers personated the deities, and they took a Cimon to their arms in the disguise of a Scamander.

It is uncertain where this Enipeus flows: Strabo (says Eustathius) imagines it to be a river of Peloponnesus, that disembogues its waters into the Alphæus; for the Thessalian river is Eniseus, and not Enipeus: this rises from mount Othrys, and receives into it the Epidanus. The former seems to be the river intended by Homer, for it takes its source from a village called Salmone; and what strengthens this conjecture is the neighbourhood of the ocean (or Neptune in this fable) to that river. Lucian has made this story of Enipeus the subject of one of his dialogues.

V. 319. *Hence sprung Amphion . . .*] The fable of Thebes built by the power of music is not mentioned by Homer, and therefore may be supposed to be of later invention. Homer relates many circumstances in these short histories differently from his successors; Epicaste is called Jocasta, and the tragedians have entirely varied the story of Oedipus: they tell us he tore out his eyes, that he was driven from Thebes, and being conducted by his daughter Antigone, arrived at Athens, where entering the temple of the furies, he died in the midst of a furious storm, and was carried by it into hell: whereas Homer directly affirms, that he continued to reign in Thebes after all his calamities.

It is not easy to give a reason why the mother, and not the father, is said to send the furies to torment Oedipus, especially because he was the murderer of his father Laius: Eustathius answers, that it was by accident that he slew Laius; but upon the discovery of his wickedness in marrying his mother Jocasta, he used her with more barbarity and rigour than was necessary, and therefore she pursues him with her vengeance. Jocasta and

Dido both die after the same manner by their own hands : I agree with Scaliger, that Virgil has described hanging more happily than Homer :

‘ Informis Lethi nodum trabe nectit ab altâ.’

Αψαμένη βροχὸν αἶθρον ἀφ’ ὑψηλοῖο μελαθρα.

There is nothing like the ‘ Informis Lethi nodus’ in Homer : and as that critic observes, ‘ tam atrox res aliquo verborum ambitu studiosius comprehendenda fuit.’ The story of Oedipus is this : Laius being informed by the oracle that he should be slain by his son, caused Oedipus immediately to be exposed by his shepherds to wild beasts ; but the shepherds preserved him, and gave him education : when he came to years of maturity he went towards Thebes in search of his father, but meeting Laius by the way, and a quarrel arising, he slew him ignorantly, and married Jocasta his mother. This is the subject of two tragedies in Sophocles.

V. 345. *Great in Orchomenos*] This is a very considerable city lying between Bœotia and Phocis, upon the river Cephissus : Homer calls it the Minyan Orchomenos, because the Minyans, an ancient people, inhabited it ; it was the colony of these Minyans that sailed to Iolcos, and gave name to the Argonauts. EUSTATHIUS.

V. 348. *Periclimenus the bold.*] The reason why Homer gives this epithet to Periclimenus may be learned from Hesiod : Neptune gave him the power to change himself into all shapes, but he was slain by Hercules : Periclimenus assaulted that hero in the shape of a bee, or fly, who discovering him in that disguise, by the means of Pallas slew him with his club. This is the person of whom Ovid speaks, but adds that he was slain in the shape of an eagle by Hercules :

‘ Mira Periclimeni mors est, cui posse figuras

Sumere quas vellet, iursusque reponere sumptas,

Neptunus dederat,’ &c.

Euphorion speaks of him in the shape of a bee or fly.

. . . . Αλλοίε δ’ αὐτὲ μελίσσαν ἀγλαὰ φύλα

Αλλοίε δεινὸς Ὀφίς

V. 357. *This dates a seer, &c.*] This story is related with great obscurity, but we learn from the xvth book that the name of this prophet was Melampus. Iphyclus was the son of Deioneus, and uncle to Tyro; he had seized upon the goods of Tyro, the mother of Neleus, among which were many beautiful oxen: these Neleus demands, but is unjustly denied by Iphyclus: Neleus had a daughter named Pero, a great beauty who was courted by all the neighbouring princes, but the father refuses her unless to the man who recovers these oxen from Iphyclus: Bias was in love with Pero, and persuades his brother Melampus, a prophet, to undertake the recovery; he attempts it, but being vanquished, is thrown into prison; but at last set at liberty, for telling Iphyclus, who was childless, how to procure issue. Iphyclus upon this gave him the oxen for a reward.

V. 364. *The stedfast purpose of th' almighty will.*] These words, *διος δ' ἐτελέετο βολη*, seem to come in without any connexion with the story, and consequently unnecessarily; but Homer speaks of it concisely, as an adventure well known in his times, and therefore not wanting a further explication: but Apollodorus relates the whole at large, lib. i. The reason why these words are inserted is, to inform us that there were ancient prophecies concerning Iphyclus, that it was decreed by Jupiter he should have no children till he had recourse to a prophet, who explaining these prophecies to him, should shew him how to obtain that blessing: in this sense, the will of Jupiter may be said to be fulfilled.

V. 372. *And live alternate, and alternate die.*] Castor and Pollux are called *Διοσκούροι*, or the sons of Jupiter; but what could give occasion to this fiction, of their living and dying alternately? Eustathius informs us that it is a physical allegory: they represent the two hemispheres of the world; the one of which is continually enlightened by the sun, and consequently the other is then in darkness: and these being successively illuminated according to the order of the day and night, one of these sons of Jupiter may be said to revive when one part of the world rises into day, and the other to die, when it descends into darkness.

What makes this allegory the more probable is, that denotes, in many allegories of Homer, the air, or the upper regions of it.

V. 383. *Nine ells aloft they rear'd their tow'ring head.*] This is undoubtedly a very bold fiction, and has been censured by some critics as monstrous, and praised by others as sublime. It may seem utterly incredible that any human creatures could be nine ells, that is, eleven yards and a quarter in height, at the age of nine years. But it may vindicate Homer as a poet to say that he only made use of a fable, that had been transmitted down from the earliest times of the world; for so early the war between the gods and giants was supposed to be. There might a rational account be given of these apparent incredibilities; if I might be allowed to say, what many authors of great name have conjectured, that these stories are only traditional, and all founded upon the ejection of the fallen angels from heaven, and the wars they had with the good angels to regain their stations. If this might be allowed, we shall then have real giants, who endeavoured to take heaven by assault; then nothing can be invented by a poet so boldly, as to exceed what may justly be believed of these beings: then the stories of heaping mountain upon mountain will come within the bounds of credibility. But without having recourse to this solution, Longinus brings this passage as an instance of true sublimity, chap. vi. He is proving that the sublime is sometimes found without the pathetic, for some passions are mean, as fear, sadness, sorrow, and consequently incapable of sublimity; and on the other hand, there are many things great and sublime, in which there is no passion. Of this kind is what Homer says concerning Otus, and Ephialtes, with so much boldness:

‘The gods they challenge, and affect the skies.’

And what he adds concerning the success of these giants is still bolder.

‘Had they to manhood grown, the bright abodes
Of heav’n had shook, and gods been heap’d on gods.’

Virgil was of the opinion of Longinus, for he has imitated Homer :

‘Hic et Aloidas geminos immania vidi
Corpora, qui manibus magnum rescindere cœlum
Aggressi, superisque Jovem detrudere regnis.’

Eustathius remarks that the ancients greatly admired the exact proportion of these giants, for the body is of a due symmetry, when the thickness is three degrees less than the height of it. According to this account the giants grew one cubit every year in bulk, and three in height. Homer says, that they fell by the shafts of Apollo, that is, they died suddenly; but other writers relate, that as they were hunting, Diana sent a stag between them, at which both at once aiming their weapons, and she withdrawing the stag, they fell by their own darts. EUSTATHIUS.

V. 387. *On Olympus tott'ring Ossa stood, &c.*] Strabo takes notice of the judgment of Homer, in placing the mountains in this order; they all stand in Macedonia: Olympus is the largest, and therefore he makes it the basis upon which Ossa stands, that being the next to Olympus in magnitude, and Pelion, being the least, is placed above Ossa, and thus they rise pyramidically. Virgil follows a different regulation :

‘Ter sunt conati imponere Pelion Ossæ,
Scilicet atque Ossæ frondosum imponere Olympum.’

V. 402. *And tow'rd his Athens bears the lovely prize.*] Homer justifies Theseus from any crime with relation to Ariadne, he is guilty of no infidelity as succeeding poets affirm; she died suddenly in Dia, or Naxos (an island lying between Thera and Crete); Diana slew her at the instigation of Bacchus, who accused her to that goddess, for profaning her temple by too free an intercourse with Theseus: this Homer calls *μαρτυρίῃ Διῶνισσῃ*. Climene was a daughter of Mynias; Mæra of Proetus and Antæa, who having made a vow to Diana of perpetual virginity, broke it; and therefore fell by that goddess. Phædra was wife to Theseus—and fell in love with her son Hippolytus. Eriphyle was the daughter of Talæus and Lysimache, wife of the prophet Amphiaraus; who being bribed with a collar of gold by Polynices, obliged her hus-

band to go to the war of Thebes, though she knew he was decreed to fall before that city : she was slain by her son Alcmaeon. EUSTATHIUS.

Ulysses when he concludes, says it is time to repose

‘ Here in the court, or yonder on the waves.’

To understand this the reader must remember, that in the beginning of the eighth book all things were prepared for his immediate voyage, or as it is there expressed,

‘ . . . E’en now the gales

Call thee aboard, and stretch the swelling sails.’

So that he desires to repose in the ship, that he may begin his voyage early in the morning.

V. 416. . . . *Aretè silence broke.*] Eustathius observes, that the two motives which the queen uses to move the Phæacians to liberality, is the relation Ulysses has to her, as her peculiar guest (for Nausicaa first recommended him to the queen’s protection), and their own wealth (for so he renders *εκαστῷ δ’ εἰμυρε τιμης*, and Dacier follows his interpretation). I have adventured to translate it differently, in this sense: ‘ It is true, he is my peculiar guest, but you all share in the honour he does us, and therefore it is equitable to join in his assistance ;’ then she closes her speech with reminding them of their abilities, which in the other sense would be tautology.

V. 454. *Thy better soul abhors the liar’s part,*

Wise is thy voice]

This is an instance of the judgment of Homer in sustaining his characters. The Phæacians were at first described as a credulous people, and he gives us here an instance of their credulity, for they swallow all these fables as so many realities. The verse in the original is remarkable :

Σοὶ δ’ ἐπὶ μὲν μορφήν ἔπειαν εἶσι δὲ φρένες εὐθλαί.

Which Eustathius thinks was used by Alcinous to tell Ulysses that his fables were so well laid together as to have the appearance of

truth; Dacier follows him, and (as usual) delivers his opinion as her own sentiment. But this cannot be Homer's intention, for it supposes Alcinoüs to look upon these relations as fables, contrary to the universal character of their ignorant credulity; I therefore am persuaded that *μοῦσ' ἠδ' ἔπειαν* signifies the pleasantness or beauty of his relation, and *ῥήνας εὐθλῆαι* the integrity of his heart in opposition to the character of a liar, or perhaps his wisdom in general: and this excellently agrees with his resembling him to a musician (who always was a poet in those ages, and sung the exploits of heroes, &c. to the lyre). In this view the sweetness of the music represents the agreeableness of the narration, and the subject of the musician's song the story of his adventures.

V. 539. *And should posterity one virtuous find,
Name Clytemnestra, they will curse the kind.]*

There cannot be a greater satire upon the fair sex than this whole conference between Ulysses and Agamemnon. Terence has fallen into the sentiment with Homer:

*Ædēpol, nē nos æquē sumus omnes invīsæ viris
Propter paucas, quæ omnes faciunt dignæ ut videamur malo.*

But how is this to be reconciled to justice, and why should the innocent suffer for the crimes of the guilty? We are to take notice, that Agamemnon speaks with anger, an undistinguishing passion, and his words flow from resentment, not reason; it must be confessed that Agamemnon had received great provocation, his wife had dishonoured his bed, and taken his life away; it is therefore no wonder if he flies out into a vehemence of language; a poet is obliged to follow nature, and give a fierceness to the features, when he paints a person in such emotions, and add a violence to his colours.

It has been objected that Homer, and even Virgil, were enemies to the fairest part of the creation; that there is scarce a good character of a woman in either of the poets: but Andromache in the Iliad, and Penelope, Arete, and Nausicaa in the Odyssey, are instances to the contrary. I must own I am a little at a loss to vindicate Ulysses in this place; he is speaking before Arete and

Nausicaa, a queen and her daughter · and entertains them with a satire upon their own sex, which may appear unpolite, and a want of decency, and be applied by Alcinous as a caution to be ware of his spouse, and not to trust her in matters of importance with his secrets; for this is the moral that is naturally drawn from the fable. Madame Dacier gives up the cause, and allows the advice of not trusting women to be good; it comes from her indeed a little unwillingly, with ‘I will not say but the counsel may be right.’ I for my part will allow Ulysses to be in an hundred faults, rather than lay such an imputation upon the ladies; Ulysses ought to be considered as having suffered twenty years calamities for that sex in the cause of Helen, and this possibly may give a little acrimony to his language. He puts it indeed in the mouth of Agamemnon; but the objection returns, why does he choose to relate such a story before a queen and her daughter? In short, I think they ought to have torn him to pieces, as the ladies of Thrace served Orpheus.

V. 541. *What mighty woes*

To thy imperial race from woman rose!]

Ulysses here means Aëropè the wife of Atreus, and mother of Agamemnon, who being corrupted by Thyestes, involved the whole family in the utmost calamities. EUSTATHIUS.

V. 565. *But say, reside my son*] Eustathius gives us the reason why Agamemnon mentions Pyle, Sparta, and Orchomenos, as places where Orestes might make his residence: Sparta was under the dominion of his brother Menelaus; Pyle, of his old friend and faithful counsellor Nestor; and Orchomenos was a city of great strength, and therefore of great security. We may evidently gather from this passage what notion the ancients had concerning a future state: namely, that persons after death were entirely strangers to the affairs of this world; for Orestes his son had slain his murderer Ægisthus, and reigned in peaceable possession of his dominions, when Agamemnon is ignorant of the whole transaction, and desires Ulysses to give him information.

V. 509. *Aslave to some poor hind that toils for bread,
Than reign the sceptred monarch of the dead.]*

Nothing sure can give us a more disadvantageous image of a future state, than this speech which Homer puts into the mouth of so great a hero as Achilles. If the poet intended to shew the vanity of that destructive glory which is purchased by the sword, and read a lecture to all the disturbers of mankind, whom we absurdly honour as heroes, it must be allowed he has done it effectually: if this was not his design, the remark of Plato, 3 Repub. is not without a foundation; he there proscribes this whole passage, as dangerous to morals, and blames the poet for making Achilles say he prefers misery and servitude to all the honours which the dead are capable of enjoying. For what, says he, can make death more terrible to young persons? And will it not dispose them to suffer all calamities to avoid it, deter them from exposing themselves to danger, even in defence of their country, and teach them to be cowards and slaves? Lucian was of Plato's opinion, for he mentions this passage, and ridicules it in his Dialogues. Dacier gives a different turn to it, and endeavours to shew that there is no danger of such consequences as Plato draws from it: 'Achilles,' adds she, 'speaks directly contrary to his declared sentiments and actions, and therefore there is no danger he should persuade mankind to prefer servitude before death, when he himself died, rather than not revenge his friend Patroclus. Such words, which are contradicted both by the sentiments and actions of him that speaks, have on the contrary a very good effect.' But I cannot come into her opinion; I will let Achilles answer for himself out of Lucian: 'In the other world I was ignorant,' says he, 'of the state of the dead, I had not experienced the difference between the two states, when I preferred a little empty glory to life.' This is an answer to what Dacier advances, for Achilles speaks with experience, and yet prefers misery and life before glory and death. I know not how to vindicate Homer, unless it be a vindication to say, that he wrote according to the opinions that anciently prevailed in the world; or that, like

Hercules, while the vehicle of Achilles is in this state of horror, his soul may be in heaven; especially since he received divine honours after death, as well as Hercules. Tull. Nat. Deor. 3. 'Astypalæa Achillem sanctissimè colit, qui si Deus est, et Orpheus,' &c.

V. 626. *The third in wisdom*] I have not ventured to render the Greek literally: Ulysses says that Neoptolemus was so wise, that only he himself and Nestor were wiser; a truth that would appear more graceful, if spoken by any other person than Ulysses. But perhaps the poet puts these words into his mouth, only because he is speaking to the Phæacians, who loved themselves to boast, and were full of vain-glory; and consequently they could not think self-praise a crime in Ulysses; on the contrary, it could not fail of having a very good effect, as it sets him off as a person of consummate wisdom.

The poet excellently sustains the character of Achilles in this interview: in the Iliad he is described a dutiful son, and always expressing a tender affection for his father Peleus; in the Odyssey he is drawn in the same soft colours: in the Iliad he is represented as a man of a strong resentment; in the Odyssey, he first imagines that his father suffers, and upon this imagination he immediately takes fire, and flies into threats and fury.

Dictys, lib. vi. relates, that Peleus was expelled from his kingdom by Acastus, but that Pyrrhus the son of Achilles afterwards revenged the injury.

V. 635. *How, lost through love Eurypylus was slain.*] It must be owned that this passage is very intricate: Strabo himself complains of its obscurity: the poet (says that author) rather proposes an enigma, than a clear history: for who are these Cætæans, and what are these 'presents of women?' And adds, that the grammarians darken, instead of clearing the obscurity. But it is no difficulty to solve these objections from Eustathius.

It is evident from Strabo himself, that Eurypylus reigned near the river Caïcus, over the Mysians, and Pliny confines it to Teuthrany; this agrees with what Ovid writes, Metam. ii.

' Teuthrantæusque Caïcus.'

And Virgil shews us that Caïcus was a river of Mysia. *Georg. iv.*

‘Saxosunque sonans Hypanis, Mysusque Caïcus.’

But what relation has Caïcus to the Cetæans? Hesychius informs us, that they are a people of Mysia, so called from the river Cetium, which runs through their country; *Κητεῖοι, γένος Μυσῶν, ἀπὸ τοῦ ποταμοῦ καλεῖται Κητεῖον*. This river discharges itself into the Caïcus, and consequently the Cetæans were Mysians, over whom Eurypylus reigned. It would be endless to transcribe the different opinions of writers cited by Eustathius; some read the verse thus:

Κητεῖοι κλισίῳσι γυναῖκα, τίμινά δαράν.

Then the meaning will be, ‘How they fell far from their wives, for the sake of a reward;’ that is, for their pay from Hector, who, as it appears from the *Iliad*, taxed the Trojans to pay the auxiliaries, one of whom was Eurypylus. Others think the word signifies, ‘Great of stature;’ and in this sense we find it used in the first line of the fourth *Odyssey*:

..... *Λακείδαιμονι Κηλῆσσαν.*

But I have followed the first opinion, as appearing most probable and natural.

But how are we to explain the second objection, or *γυναῖκα τίμινά δαράν*? Some (says Eustathius) understand the expression as applied to Neoptolemus, and not Eurypylus; namely, Eurypylus and his soldiers fell by means of the ‘gifts of women;’ that is, Neoptolemus was led to the war by the promise of having Hermione in marriage, the daughter of Menelaus, which promise occasioned the death of Eurypylus, by bringing Neoptolemus to the siege of Troy. Others understand it to be spoken of a golden vine, sent by Priam to his sister Astyoche the mother of Eurypylus, to induce her to persuade her son to undertake this expedition to Troy, where he was slain by the son of Achilles; this vine was said to be given to Tros, the father of Priam, by Jupiter, as a recompense for his carrying away his son Ganymede to be his cup-bearer: but this is too much a fable to be followed. Others more probably assert, that Priam had promised one of his daugh-

ters to Eurypylus, to engage his assistance in the war; and this agrees very well with Homer's manner of writing in many places of the Iliad; and there is a great resemblance between Eurypylus in the Odyssey and Othryoneus in the Iliad, lib. xiii. 461 :

'Cassandra's love he sought, with boasts of pow'r,
And promis'd conquest was the proffer'd dow'r.'

Spondanius cites a passage from Dictys, lib. iv. that very well explains these difficulties; 'Inter quæ tam læta (nimirum mortem Achilles, &c.) Priamo supervenit nuncius Eurypylum Telephi filium ex Mysia adventare, quæ rex multis antea illectum præmiis, ad postremum oblatione Cassandræ confirmaverat, addiderat etiam auream vitem, et ob id per Populos memorabilem.'

V. 669. *Though to the contest Thetis gave the laws,
And Pallas, by the Trojans, judg'd the cause.]*

There are two particulars which want explicatio in these verses: how did Thetis give the law to the contest between Ajax and Ulysses? and how could the Trojans be made judges to determine between two Grecian heroes? Thetis, the mother of Achilles, was a goddess, and out of honour to her, the chiefs of the Grecian army proposed the arms of her son as a reward to the most worthy; and poetry, to give a magnificence to the story, introduces the goddess as acting in person what is done upon her account. Thetis may properly be said to be desirous that the memory of her son should be honoured; and Homer, to express this desire poetically, tells us it was the act of that goddess to propose the arms of Achilles as a reward to the most worthy of the Grecian heroes.

The second difficulty is fully explained by Eustathius: Agamemnon finding it an invidious affair to give the preference to any one of the Grecian heroes, and being willing to avoid the reproach of partiality, commanded the Trojan prisoners to be brought before the whole army, and asked from which of the two heroes, Ajax or Ulysses, they had received the greater detriment; they immediately replied, from Ulysses: thus the Trojans adjudged the cause. The poet adds, that this was done by Minerva; that

is, the affair was conducted with wisdom, the result of which in poetry is usually ascribed to the goddess of it; and no doubt but the goddess of wisdom must always prefer wisdom to mere valour, or an Ulysses to an Ajax. This decision is related in a very different manner by other poets; in particular, by Ovid in his *Metamorphoses*; but Lucian in his *Dialogues* agrees with Homer in every point very circumstantially; and consequently, with some obscurity; but what I have here said fully explains that dialogue of Lucian, as well as this passage of Homer.

V. 691. *The shade disdains to stay,
In silence turns, and sullen stalks away.]*

This silence of Ajax was very much admired by the ancients, and Longinus proposes it as an instance of the true sublimity of thought, which springs from an elevation of soul, and not from the diction; for a man may be truly sublime without speaking a word: thus in the silence of Ajax there is something more noble, than in any thing he could possibly have spoken.

V. 701. *Still as they plead]* The expression in the Greek is remarkable, ἤμῃσι, σταστέεσσι; that is, 'standing and sitting;' this is to be referred to different persons; the σταστέεσσι were the συνδικασταί, or persons who pleaded the cause of the guilty or innocent before the infernal judges; the ἤμῃσι were the persons for whom they pleaded, or those who were about to receive judgment. I doubt not but this was a custom observed in the courts of judicature in the days of Homer. EUSTATHIUS.

V. 703. *Orion of portentous size,
Swift through the gloom a giant-hunter flies.]*

The diversion of this infernal hunter may seem extraordinary in pursuing the shadow of beasts; but it was the opinion of the ancients, that the same passions to which men were subject on earth continued with them in the other world; and their shades were liable to be affected in the same manner as their bodies.

V. 736. *Up the high hill he heaves a huge round stone.]* This is a very remarkable instance of the beauty of Homer's versification; it is taken notice of by Eustathius, but copiously explained by Dionysius Halicarnassus, in his treatise of placing words,

Λααν βασταζοίη πελωρίον ἀμφότερησιν,
 Ἦτι ο μὲν σκηρπιόμεν^{ος} χερσιν τε ποσσὶν τε,
 Λααν ἀνω ὤθεσκε.

Here (says Dionysius) we see in the choice and disposition of the words the fact which they describe; the weight of the stone, and the striving to heave it up the mountain; effect this, Homer clogs the verse with spondees or long syllables, and leaves the vowels open, as in *λααν*, and in *ἀνω ὤθεσκε*, which two words it is impossible to pronounce without hesitation and difficulty; the very words and syllables are heavy, and, as it were, make resistance in the pronunciation, to express the heaviness of the stone, and the difficulty with which it is forced up the mountain. To give the English reader a faint image of the beauty of the original in the translation, I have loaded the verse with monosyllables, and these almost all begin with aspirates:

‘Up the high hill he heaves a huge round stone.’

Homer is no less happy in describing the rushing down of the stone from the top of the mountain.

Διῆτις ἐπειδὴ πεδονδε κυλινδεῖο λαα; ἀναιδης.

Is it not evident (continues Dionysius) that the swiftness of the verse imitates the celerity of the stone in its descent; nay, that the verse runs with the greater rapidity? What is the cause of this? It is because there is not one monosyllable in the line, and but two dissyllables, ten of the syllables are short, and not one spondee in it, except one that could not be avoided at the conclusion of it; there is no hiatus or gap between word and word, no vowels left open to retard the celerity of it: the whole seems to be but one word, the syllables melt into one another, and flow away with the utmost rapidity in a torrent of dactyls. I was too sensible of the beauty of this not to endeavour to imitate it, though unsuccessfully: I have therefore thrown it into the swiftness of an Alexandrine, to make it of a more proportionable number of syllables with the Greek.

I refer the reader for a fuller explication of these verses to Dionysius.

V. 743. *Hercules, a shadowy form.*] This is the passage formerly referred to in these annotations, to prove that Hercules was in heaven, while his shade was in the infernal regions; a full evidence of the partition of the human composition into three parts: the body is buried in the earth; the image, or εἰδωλον, descends into the region of the departed; and the soul, or the divine part of man, is received into heaven: thus the body of Hercules was consumed in the flames, his image is in hell, and his soul in heaven. There is a beautiful moral couched in the fable of his being married to Hebe, or youth, after death; to imply, that a perpetual youth, or a reputation which never grows old, is the reward of those heroes who, like Hercules, employ their courage for the good of humankind.

V. 758. *Inimitably wrought with skill divine.*] This verse is not without obscurity; Eustatius gives us several interpretations of it:

Μη, τεχνησάμενός, μηδ' ἄλλο τι τεχνησάσθω.

The negative μη being repeated, seems to be redundant; and this in a great measure occasions the difficulty: but in the Greek language two negatives more strongly deny; this being premised, we may read the verse as if the former μη were absent, and then the meaning will be, 'He that made this zone, never made any thing equal to it,' as if we should say, that Phidias, who made the statue of Jupiter, never made any other statue like it; that is, he employed the whole power of his skill upon it. Others understand the verse as an execration: 'Oh never, never may the hand that made it, make any thing again so terrible as this zone;' and this will give some reason for the repetition of the negative particles. Dacier approves of this latter explication, and moralizes upon it: it proceeds (says she) from a tender sentiment of humanity in Ulysses, who wishes that there may never more be occasion for such a design as the artist executed in this belt of Hercules; that there may be no more giants to conquer, no more monsters to tame, nor no more human blood to be shed. I wish that such a pious and well-natured explication were to be drawn from the passage! But how is it possible that the artist who made this zone should ever make another, when he had been in his

grave some centuries (for such a distance there was between the days of Hercules and Ulysses)? and consequently—it would be impertinent to wish it. I have therefore followed the former interpretation. I will only add, that this belt of Hercules is the reverse of the girdle of Venus: in that there is a collection of every thing that is amiable; in this, a variety of horrors: but both are master-pieces of their kind.

V. 777. *And haply had survey'd*
The godlike Theseus]

Plutarch in his life of Theseus informs us, that this verse has been thought not genuine; but added to the Odyssey, in honour of the Athenians, by Pisistratus.

The poet shews us that he had still a noble fund of invention, and had it in his power to open new scenes of wonder and entertainment; but that this infernal episode might not be too long, he shifts the scene: the invention of the gorgon which terrifies him from a longer abode in these realms of darkness, gives a probable reason for his immediate return. Eustathius informs us from Athenæus, that Alexander the Midian writes in his History of Animals, that there really was a creature in Lybia which the Nomades called a gorgon; it resembled a wild ram, or, as some affirm, a calf; whose breath was of such a poisonous nature, as to kill all that approached it: in the same region the catoblepton is found, a creature like a bull, whose eyes are so fixed in the head as chiefly to look downward. Pliny calls it Catoblepas, lib. viii cap. 21, which is likewise supposed to kill with its eyes.

END OF VOL. III.

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